

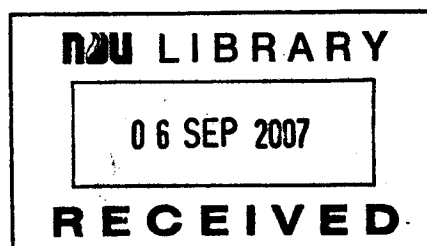
**Notre Dame University  
Louaize – Lebanon**

**Faculty of Political Science, Public Administration  
& Diplomacy**

**Brain Drain  
The Lebanese Case**

**M.A. Thesis in International Affairs**

**By:  
Betty Elias HINDI**



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The Lebanese Case**

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## List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

<b>Bop:</b>	Balance of Payments.
<b>DOD:</b>	Draft on Demand.
<b>ENSSEA:</b>	École Nationale Supérieure de Statistique et d'Économie Appliquée.
<b>ILO:</b>	International Labor Organization.
<b>IOM:</b>	International Organization for Migration.
<b>ISSER:</b>	Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research.
<b>GDP:</b>	Gross Domestic Product.
<b>GNI:</b>	Gross National Income.
<b>GNP:</b>	Gross National Product.
<b>HRST:</b>	Human Resources in Science and Technology.
<b>ICT:</b>	Information and Communication Technologies.
<b>LSMS:</b>	Living Standards Measurements Study.
<b>MFA:</b>	Managed Funds Association.
<b>MFI:</b>	Microfinance Institutions.
<b>NGO:</b>	Non-Governmental Organization.
<b>Norad:</b>	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation.
<b>ODA:</b>	Official Development Assistance.
<b>OECD:</b>	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development.
<b>PLO:</b>	Palestine Liberation Organization.
<b>PPG:</b>	Public and Publicly Guaranteed.
<b>PRIO:</b>	International Peace Research Institute, Oslo.
<b>SME:</b>	Small and medium enterprise.
<b>TOKTEN:</b>	Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals.
<b>UK:</b>	United Kingdom.
<b>UN:</b>	United Nations.
<b>US:</b>	United States.
<b>UNCTAD:</b>	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.
<b>UNDP:</b>	United Nations Development Program.
<b>UNHCR:</b>	United Nations Human Rights Council.
<b>UNRWA:</b>	United Nations Relief and Works Agency.
<b>WWI:</b>	World War One.
<b>WWII:</b>	World War Two.

## Introduction

Human migration as a phenomenon, be it tribal or individual, caused by economic, political or religious factors, has taken place at all times. Throughout history, migration changed and evolved as labor markets and society become more global and migration categories become more diverse.<sup>1</sup>

According to the report of the Secretary General on "International Migration and Development", international migrants numbered 191 million in 2005: 115 million lived in developed countries and 75 million in developing countries.<sup>2</sup> Between 1990 and 2005, high-income countries as a whole registered the highest increase in the number of international migrants (41 million). Moreover, female migrants constitute nearly half of all migrants worldwide, and they are more numerous than male migrants in developed countries. Keeping in mind that nearly 6 out of every 10 international migrants live in high-income economies, that include as well 22 developing countries, including Bahrain, Brunei Darussalam, Kuwait, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Singapore and the United Arab Emirates. It is also a fact that about a third of the 191 million migrants in the world have moved from one developing country to another, and another

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1- See, Charles Tilly, "Transplanted networks", in *Immigration Reconsidered, History, Sociology, and Politics*, United Kingdom, Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 79 – 95.

2- *International Migration and Development*, Report of the Secretary General, New York, United Nations, May 2006, p. 12.

third have moved from a developing country to a developed country. That is to say, "South-to-South" migrants are about as numerous as "South-to-North" migrants. Besides, migrants with tertiary education constituted just under half of the increase in the number of international migrants aged 25 or over in OECD countries during the 1990s and nearly 6 out of every 10 highly educated migrants living in OECD countries in 2000 came from developing countries.<sup>3</sup>

Various migration models, push and pull factors (economic, political, cultural, and environmentally based), as well as barriers and obstacles to migration have been established since World War II (Khalaf 1987). Recent years witnessed a growing recognition of the importance of international recruitment and movement of the highly skilled. Modern industries and services increasingly rely upon the acquisition, deployment and use of human expertise to add value in their operations. When this expertise is not available locally, employers frequently import it from abroad. This is what is commonly referred to as "brain drain". Brain drain or human capital flight is an emigration of trained and talented individuals. This term was first used in the 1950s to describe the outflow of scientists and technologists to the United States and Canada after WWII. It parallels the term "capital flight" which refers to financial capital which is no longer invested in the country where its owner lived and earned it. Investment in higher education is lost to another country which has made no investment but reaps the

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3- *Ibid.*, p. 12.



benefits, when the trained individual leaves, usually not to return to the country of origin. Also whatever social capital the individual has been a part of is reduced by his departure<sup>4</sup>.

The question here is whether there is a positive relationship between flows of skilled labor and flows of investment and what could governments do to turn brain drain into brain gain? Recently, researchers<sup>5</sup> (Adams 2006), (Ammassari 2004), (Carling 2005), (Ammassari & Black 2001) have been examining the relationship between migration and development and the improvement of economic and social conditions at both origin and destination country of the migrant. It is widely recognized that properly managed migration may generate important gains not only for migrants but also for host and sending countries.<sup>6</sup> Developing countries in particular may have a lot to gain in terms of growth, investment, human capital accumulation and poverty reduction if they manage to restructure effectively their economies following emigration and diffuse these benefits

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4- Fitzhugh Mullan, "Quantifying the Brain Drain: International Medical Graduates in the US, UK, Canada and Australia", *2005 Health in Foreign Policy Forum*, N.P., Academy Health, February, 2005.

5- Richard H. Adams, Jr., *Migration, Remittances and Development: the Critical Nexus in the Middle East and North Africa*, UN Expert Group Meeting on International Migration and Development in the Arab Region, Beirut, May 2006. Savina Ammassari, "Gestion des migrations et politique de développement: optimiser les bénéfices de la migration internationale en Afrique de l'Ouest", in *Cahiers de Migrations Internationales*, 72F, Bureau International du Travail, Genève, 2004. Jorgen Carling, *Migrant Remittances and Development Cooperation*, PRIO Report I/2005, Oslo, International Peace Research Institute, 2005. Savina Ammassari & Richard Black, *Harnessing the Potential of Migration and Return to Promote Development*, Geneva, International Organization for Migration (IOM), No. 5, 2001.

6- Stefanie Hertlein and Florin Vadean, "Remittances – A Bridge between Migration and Development?", in *Focus Migration – Policy Brief*, No. 5, N.P., September 2006, p. 1 – 8.

throughout the economy.<sup>7</sup> To do so, migration and development policies need to become more coherent. On 14 and 15 September 2006, high-level representatives of all States Members of the United Nations gathered to explore the potential for migrants to help transform their native countries and how countries can cooperate to create triple wins, for migrants, for their countries of origin and for the societies that receive them.<sup>8</sup>

The circulation of people has long been a key component in the Mediterranean Basin. It is an essential part of the relations between countries, within the region and with the outside world. Where does Lebanon stand? This study will tackle migration as a brain drain in the Lebanese case with the possibility of reversing the loss equation into a win-win situation.

While Brain Drain remains the main focus of this study, the first chapter discusses the reasons that triggered the Lebanese migration which had a different profile at the beginning of the phenomenon in the 1880s. This chapter frames Lebanese migration in 5 waves and exposes the push and pull factors of everyone of them.

The first three waves (1880-1920, 1920-1943, 1943-1975) constitute in this study, the preparatory phase for brain drain which is as discussed earlier, a new concept. The 1975-1990 and 1990-2000 waves are discussed

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7- Barney Cohen, "Urban Growth in Developing Countries: A Review of Current Trends and a Caution of Existing Forecasts", in *World Development*, Vol. 32, No. 1, p. 23 – 51.

8- Kofi Anan, The Secretary General Address to the High Level Dialogue of the General Assembly on International Migration and Development, New York, September 14, 2006, p. 5.

under recent migration waves and thoroughly fit the description of the brain drain migration.

Thus, destinations are a key player in attracting the experienced, highly educated and/or well educated Lebanese youth. Reasons driving Lebanese to choose between the receiving countries are the focus of the third part of this chapter.

After having discussed the reasons of Lebanese migration and exposed its most preferred destinations, I shall tackle in the next chapter the issue of brain drain as a phenomenon, then as a Lebanese case.

Brain drain is considered to be a part of “career migration, which characterizes individuals and households that are more in response to opportunities to change position within or among large structures, such as corporations, states, and professional labor markets.”<sup>9</sup> That said, we shall start by specifying the causes of brain drain (political and socio-economical) and the migrants’ profile of the forth and the fifth waves.

The result and the impact of the brain drain on the Lebanese society and economy will be addressed in order to propose ways to reversing the equation and using remittances as the development tool that would enable us to find a win-win situation.

While this study proposes ways of reducing remittances costs and brain drain reinvestments, it does not claim at any point that the suggestions will all fit the Lebanese case. A sociological and economical study of the

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9- Charles Tilly, *Op. Cit.*, p. 79 – 95.

Lebanese society and economy is a must in order to complete an exhaustive and coherent “action plan” to curb brain drain from Lebanon.

Lebanon depended on migration for years. It helped it grow, prosper and remain demographically balanced. However, the migrants’ profile changed affecting by then the quality of migration and its impact on Lebanese society and economy. Michel Chiha, in a lecture given at the Cenacle on December 17<sup>th</sup>, 1951 asserts that “we could not be able to live without emigration, but if emigration became too vast, it would be the end of us.”<sup>10</sup>

Chapter One will broadly expose the dynamics of the Lebanese migration from 1880 till 2000.

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10- Michel Chiha, *Lebanon at Home and Abroad*, Translated from French by Leo Arnold and Jean Montegu, Beirut, The Publications of the Cenacle, 1966, p. 114.

## Chapter One

### Patterns of Lebanese Migration

#### 1. Lebanese Migration throughout History

The Lebanese have always been on the move: while overseas migration from modern Mount Lebanon became perceivable and important in the 1880s, the internal exodus was familiar to the peasant population. Maronites for example migrated from the North to settle in the Kesserwan, the Metn, and the Shouf.<sup>11</sup>

To begin with, limiting the modern Lebanese emigration to the 1880s would not be totally accurate; though scholars have not yet managed to find older traces. Therefore, in this study, similarly to all other literature on Lebanese migration, the 1880s will be considered as the beginning era of the modern Lebanese migration phenomenon.<sup>12</sup> Why the 1880s, what was the migrants' profile and what were their preferred destinations?

According to Charles Issawi, the origins of the Lebanese emigration phenomenon can be traced to the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and to the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when Mount Lebanon was the scene of several regional and international conflicts that led to civil wars and clashes among

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11- Leila Tarazi-Fawaz, *Merchants and Migrants in Nineteenth-Century Beirut*, Harvard Middle Eastern Studies, 18, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1983, p. 22 – 23.

12- Nabih Kanaan-Atallah, "Liban, États-Unis: un siècle d'émigration", in *Hannon, Revue Libanaise de Géographie*, Liban, Université Libanaise, Vol. XXI, 1989 – 1992, p. 50

the mountains' residents – notably Maronite Christians and Druses – in 1840 and 1860.<sup>13</sup>

While the episodic civil wars had certainly a direct impact on triggering flood of migrants to the Americas, it is the population growth and internal exodus to the cities that played a major role in transforming migration into a phenomenon, described by Philip Hitti as a plague.<sup>14</sup>

As a matter of fact, “the 19<sup>th</sup> century is identified as a period of coastal revival, owing to growth of trade with Europe following the industrial revolution and the development of steam navigation.”<sup>15</sup> Thus, the city of Beirut for example grew in 75 years from a “town of 6.000 to a metropolis of 120.000.”<sup>16</sup> This drastic demographic transformation is a key player in the Lebanese migration history: fleeing the mountains because of lack of jobs and opportunities, add to it the deterioration of the lands' value due to splitting the heritage among brothers, a lot of young single men settled in the city – notably Beirut – where the less educated would work at the port and the literate ones would work as middle men or translators for tourists and traders from the West.<sup>17</sup>

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13- Charles Issawi, “The Historical Background of Lebanese Emigration: 1880 – 1914”, in *The Lebanese in the World: A Century of Emigration*, United Kingdom, 1992, p. 13 – 31.

14- Philip Hitti, *The Syrians in America*, New York, Georges H. Doran Company, 1924, p. 51 – 52.

15- Leila Tarazi-Fawaz, *Op. Cit.*, p. 2.

16- *Ibid.*, p. 2.

17- Rev. Karam Rizk, “Vie spirituelle et culturelle au Liban de 1845 à 1870”, in *Parole de l'Orient*, Vol. XV (1988 – 1989), Liban, p. 321 – 322.

Whereas exodus was a solution for these men at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it was not anymore by the 1880s. By then, Beirut was crowded; jobs were rare and less lucrative. After 75 years of geometric demographic growth, Beirut was ready to give away its new residents in favor of the New World: America.<sup>18</sup>

It is also crucial to note that most literature on Lebanese migration defines the pioneering migrants as being young single men, peasants and predominantly illiterate, working as pedlars; shifting by then from peasantry to trade.<sup>19</sup> However, recent research will reveal a number of single women involved in migration activities. It has been very common and known among Lebanese migration researchers and experts that – at least at first – women only traveled to join their families or to get married.<sup>20</sup> More research and findings might drive us to change this assumption. Nevertheless, this new theory affects the profile of the first women

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18- See, Eliane N. Fersan, *L'émigration libanaise aux États-Unis, d'après les archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères de France (1920 – 1931)*, (Masters Thesis), Liban, USEK, 2005, p. 29 – 30.

19- See, Philip Hitti, *The Syrians in America*, *OP. Cit.*, p. 57 and Samir Khalaf, “The Background and Causes of Lebanese/Syrian Immigration to the United States before World War One”, in *Crossing the Waters*, Washington DC, Smithsonian Institute Press, 1987, p. 28.

20- While researching material and interviewing researchers in this field, I have noticed that extensive research is being conducted on gendered migration. New findings may alter somehow the known assumptions and bring in new perspectives. These studies are yet to be published.

migrants; it does not provoke much change to the balance of the gendered migration. Men are certainly and undoubtedly a predominant majority.<sup>21</sup>

In short, “industrialization, urban development, cheaper and safer intercontinental travel and a population explosion largely due to improved health practices had already led to an immense migration wave beginning in the early 1800s. This wave flowed primarily from northern Europe to the under populated lands of North and South America and Australia. Lebanese participation in this wave started later in the century, directed first to North America, and then to Latin America, Australia and Sub-Saharan Africa.”<sup>22</sup>

Lebanese migration fits then the global migration pattern triggered after the industrialization of Europe and the emerging economic boom of the Americas. The following chapter will start by exposing the causes of migration from Lebanon; that is the push factors that made Lebanese leave home and then the pull factors, that is the opportunities offered by the host countries, attracting Lebanese to these specific destinations.

## **2. Causes of Migration from Lebanon: Push & Pull Factors**

Lebanese migration is a 127 years old phenomenon if we consider 1880, the beginning of the first wave of migration from Mount Lebanon.

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21- See, George Labaki, *The Maronites in the United States*, Lebanon, Notre Dame University of Louaize Press, 1993, p. 65 – 67.

22- Patricia Joan Nabti, *International Emigration from a Lebanese Village: Bishmizzinis on six Continents*, Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Berkeley, University of California, 1989, p. 43 – 44.



Therefore, we will be considering five waves of Lebanese migration between 1880 and 2006: the first three waves (first, second, third) will be discussed under this section, the last two (fourth and fifth) will be under recent migration from Lebanon, and therefore discussed under the following section.

- First) 1880 – 1920:** 1880: beginning of migration phenomenon from Mount Lebanon;  
1920: beginning of the French mandate on Lebanon at the end of the World War I.
- Second) 1920 – 1943:** French mandate period.
- Third) 1943 – 1975:** Lebanon as an independent republic; the pre-civil War era.
- Fourth) 1975 – 1990:** civil war era.
- Fifth) 1990 – 2000:** post-civil war era.

### 1<sup>st</sup>) First Wave (1880 – 1920)

Factors of migration will be split into push and pull factors “although it is admittedly difficult to maintain at all times a clear distinction between the two.”<sup>23</sup> There, it is wise to point out the two general perspectives of experts on the subject. The first group mostly philosophers, humanists and literary figures, “perceives migration as a reflection of the innate

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23- Samir Khalaf, *Op. Cit.*, p. 17.

predisposition of the Lebanese to be on the move.”<sup>24</sup> This predisposition can be traced back to their Phoenician roots and their mercantile expeditions and expansions. The second group stresses on the socio-economic, political and historical circumstances “that either ‘pushed’ or ‘pulled’ the Lebanese out of their familiar surroundings and prompted them to uproot themselves and seek fortunes in the distant corners of the globe.”<sup>25</sup>

Issawi for instance, considers the clashes and civil wars in 1840 and 1860 the major causes of massive emigration waves from Lebanon.<sup>26</sup> Whereas the peace instated in Mount Lebanon with the enactment of the Mutassarifiate’s regime brought new challenges to the residents; while the economy relied on barter and exchange of goods, the new political regime opened the mountain to European goods and markets shifting them from the autarchy regime to the “world economy” regime that required the use of liquid money which was unusual in Mount Lebanon at that time.<sup>27</sup> There, the rarity of liquid money increased the deficit and personal debts and loans the peasants took to buy mulberry trees that were necessary for silk production.<sup>28</sup>

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24- *Ibid.*, p. 17.

25- *Ibid.*, p. 17.

26- Charles Issawi, *Op. Cit.*, p. 13 – 31.

27- Eliane N. Fersan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 27 – 28.

28- *Ibid.*, p. 27 – 28.

On the other hand, mulberry trees were grown in more a 40% of the cultivated lands and silk production consisted in 1873 of 82.5% of Mount Lebanon's exports.<sup>29</sup> While silk production brought wealth and prosperity to the mountain, it also created a gap in its economy: or what is called "the 'monoproduction' of exportation,"<sup>30</sup> leaving the cultivation of edible products in the favor of the silk production in a country that barely suffices its own needs while experiencing a demographic boom. This made the poor local rural markets more depending on importing the essential goods. Now all would have been running well if it wasn't for what the historians call the "Silk Crisis" that left its deep impacts on the society and the economy.

As a matter of fact, in 1890, 18 years after the silk boom, the price of one oka declined to 19 piasters while it had reached 45.5 piasters in 1872.<sup>31</sup> This crisis was due to challenging silk products coming from China and Japan of better quality and cheaper price. The concurrence became more notable after the opening of the Suez Canal which reduced the cost of exportation and therefore the merchandises' price. At that time, France, the city of Lyon, the biggest Lebanese silk importer, started shifting towards Asian silk. This caused a great decline in the prices and in silk production.<sup>32</sup>

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29- Akram Khater, " 'House' to 'Goddess of the House': Gender, Class and Silk in the 19th Century Mount Lebanon", in *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 28, August 1996, No. 3, p. 326 – 327.

30- Boutros Labaki, "L'émigration libanaise en fin de période ottomane (1850 – 1914)", in *Hannon Revue Libanaise de Géographie*, Liban, Université Libanaise, Vol. XIX, 1987, p. 9.

31- Akran Khater, *Op., Cit.*, p. 328 – 329.

32- Eliane N. Fersan, *Op., Cit.*, p. 328 – 329.

By that time, corresponding with the decline of silk prices or what is called the silk crisis, Mount Lebanon was strongly dependant on imports.<sup>33</sup> As a matter of fact, Lebanon became the silk farm of Lyon and was incapable of subsiding and providing its basic needs locally.<sup>34</sup>

While the economy was suffering from great decline, the Mutassarifiate regime which brought peace into the mountain strengthened the influence of the great powers among the different religious factions of Mount Lebanon. There, missionaries – notably from France – opened several dispensaries that helped raise the life average and reduce sickness and diseases, thus leading to a demographic boom while reducing mortality rate.<sup>35</sup>

Subsequently, Beirut's population quadrupled between 1830 and 1850, and doubled once more between 1865 and 1920. This growth in numbers is primarily due to internal exodus from the over population of Mount Lebanon. This exodus was also due to the lack of jobs and the reduced size of the inherited pieces of land which could not produce sufficiently any more.<sup>36</sup>

When Beirut became over-populated and could not offer new jobs for the endless flow, migration took larger amplitude and new destinations

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33- Boutros Labaki, "L'émigration libanaise en fin de période ottomane (1850 – 1914)", *Op., Cit.*, p. 9.

34- *Ibid.*, p. 11.

35- *Ibid.*, p. 8.

36- Eliane N. Fersan, *Op., Cit.*, p. 29 – 30. Christians constituted the majority of Mount Lebanon's population.

notably towards the new world: America. The migration flow was facilitated by the accessibility of transportation means and then encouraged by the testimonies of the many enriched returning migrants.<sup>37</sup> Transportation fees became more reduced due to the large number of navigation companies operating from the port of Beirut; this is also an undoubtedly strong cause for encouraging emigration.<sup>38</sup>

On another hand, young men fleeing from military recruitment, notably Muslims from Tripoli, Beirut and Saida took advantage from the availability of transportation means to migrate and escape. Here, one should note that residents of Mount Lebanon were excluded from military recruitment regardless of their religion.<sup>39</sup>

However, a new reform occurred in 1876 in an attempt to reintegrate the minorities of the Sultanate. There, all subjects became equal in rights and obligations. Suspended in 1877 by Sultan Abdel Hamid II, it was reinstated in 1908.<sup>40</sup> While the residents of the wilayas suffered from this reinstatement, the administrative council of the Mutassarifiate refused twice to apply the Ottoman constitution on the autonomous territory of Mount

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37- Philip Hitti, *The Syrians in America*, *Op. Cit.*, p. 55.

38- Leila Tarazi-Fawaz, *Op. Cit.*, p. 61.

39- 'Abdalāh al-Malāh, *Mūtaṣarifiyat Djabal Lübnān Bayna 1902 Wa 1915, al-Wāqi' al-Siyāsī al-Idjtimā'ī al-'ām*, (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis), Fanar, Lebanese University Section II, 1990, p. 11.

40- Paul Dumont, "La période des Tanzimat (1839 – 1878)", in *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman*, sous la direction de Rober Mantran, France, Fayard, 1989, p. 459.

Lebanon, sparing by then all the residents of the mountain from conscription.<sup>41</sup>

In short, Khalaf asserts that “of all the measures associated with the Ottomans, conscription was by far the most widely feared.”<sup>42</sup> This situation was exploited by the “Simsars” the ticket agents who were generally returning migrants selling their success stories throughout Mount Lebanon and benefiting from an important percentage upon every sold ticket.<sup>43</sup> In parallel, Naff enumerates among other stories that of a M. Faris N., a returning migrant, who, while visiting his family and cousins, dazzled them by the amount of money he made in the United States. Weeks later, Faris goes back to the US accompanied by 32 persons from his village.<sup>44</sup>

“It was like a gold rush, steamship agents recruiting passengers for their ships in the form of cheap labor for America’s industries.”<sup>45</sup> Those who could not afford to buy a ticket to get to the other side of the world would rely on money lenders to ensure a place on the next steamship in destination to America.<sup>46</sup> These money lenders granted loans to all those who asked for it as they were reassured of getting their money back. All

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41- 'Abdalāh al-Malāḥ, *Op. Cit.*, p. 11.

42- Samir Khalaf, *Op. Cit.*, p. 28.

43- Elie Safa, *Op. Cit.*, p. 179.

44- Alixa Naff, "Lebanese Immigration into the United States: 1880 to the Present", in *The Lebanese in the World: A Century of Emigration*, United Kingdom, The Center for Lebanese Studies, Oxford, 1992, p. 144.

45- F. Kleem, *The Cleveland Maronite Lebanese and Education*, (Doctoral Thesis), Cleveland Ohio, 1986, p. 20, cited in Louis Ferkh, *Conflict and Migration: The Lebanese Emigrants' Potential Role in the Development of Lebanon*, (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis), United Kingdom, University of Limerick, 1991, p. 84.

46- Philip Hitti, *The Syrians in American*, *Op., Cit.*, p. 53.

returning migrants built Italian red tiled houses, and those who did not come back, sent money to their families.

The visible prosperity signs all over the mountain led to an “emigration fever” which emptied Mount Lebanon from its young male residents.<sup>47</sup> Between 1860 and 1914, close to 210.000 departures were registered, without counting the clandestine travelers.<sup>48</sup> If these numbers were exact, then 45% of Mount Lebanon’s population would have migrated between 1860 and 1914<sup>49</sup>; the estimates of Mount Lebanon population’s in 1913 being of approximately 468.714 resident.<sup>50</sup>

Finally, missionaries’ schools were a prominent indirect factor of pushing Lebanese to migrate. By introducing the culture of the West into the minds and the lives of the students, missionary schools adapted the teaching programs to the needs of society.<sup>51</sup> Foreign languages were taught to help a better social insertion as the economy was shifting towards the tertiary sector and people opting for more lucrative jobs such as middle men and translators for foreign tourists and merchants.

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47- Louis Ferkh, *Op., Cit.*, p. 84.

48- IRFED: Besoins et possibilités du développement au Liban, Tome I, Beyrouth, 1960 – 1961, p. 49, Ministère du Plan – Beyrouth, cited in Boutros Labaki, "L’émigration libanaise en fin de période ottomane (1850 – 1914)", *Op., Cit.*, p. 15.

49- Youssef Courbage et Philippe Fargues, *La situation démographique au Liban, Analyses et données*, publication du Centre de Recherches de l’Institut des Sciences Sociales de l’Université Libanaise – Beyrouth, 1974, cited in Boutros Labaki, "L’émigration libanaise en fin de période ottomane (1850 – 1914)", *Op., Cit.*, p. 8 and 15.

50- *Ibid.*, p. 8.

51- Rev. Karam Rizk, *Op. Cit.*, p. 321 – 322.

These new taught skills helped Lebanese get more exposed to the West and more inclined to discover its endless opportunities described with passion by returning migrants, missionaries, foreign tourists and merchants they were in contact with. Karam Rizk describes it as the irreversible Occidental orientation of Lebanon.<sup>52</sup>

In parallel, a number of factors pulled the Lebanese to other shores; however, a study of such scope will not allow us to elaborate this side thoroughly as the countries of destination are numerous, and pull factors can be very different. To this effect, we shall discuss the ones that helped trigger the migration phenomenon.

Lebanese migrated initially inside the Sultanate and landed first in Egypt were the prosperous economy and the freedom of speech, were insured by the British control over Egypt's resources and politics.<sup>53</sup> On the other hand, rumors of success in "Amerka" which also covered in the peasants' simple minds Australia, Brazil, Canada, and Argentina<sup>54</sup> started to pull Lebanese to the New World's dazzling opportunities.

However, most researchers agree that the two large expositions held in the United States – the earliest taking place in Philadelphia in 1876, celebrating the United States Centennial, and the second being in Chicago World's Fair

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52- *Ibid.*, p. 361.

53- Louis Ferkh, *Op. Cit.*, p. 81 and Philip Hitti, *The History of Lebanon*, Dar Al-Thakafat, Beirut, 1978, p. 206.

54- Charles Issawi, *Op. Cit.*, p. 30 – 31.



in 1893<sup>55</sup> – had a major influence on Lebanese migration as the Porte had encouraged its subjects to participate in these expositions representing the Sultanate. The echoes of the first exposition pulled a lot of people to participate in the second.

Furthermore, countries like the United States of America had the highest rate of national income per capita growth among industrial countries (4.3% per annum) between 1870 and 1913.<sup>56</sup> Brazil for instance experienced the Rubber Boom which attracted migrants from all over the world in the 1890s.<sup>57</sup> What is more, all countries on the American continent were under-populated and presented great opportunities for hard workers. In Brazil for instance, the abolition of slavery created new jobs due to market expansion as Lebanese pedlars – or "mescates" – sold their goods door to door in the hinterlands of Brazil, where these items were not found yet and were most needed.<sup>58</sup> Lebanese pedlars managed to create this link and profit from it.

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55- "The Ottoman Sultan may have sparked Lebanese migration when he urged his subjects to exhibit their traditional arts and crafts at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition in 1876," in Alixa Naff, *Op. Cit.*, p. 144, Also see Jo Carolyn Sekaly Gibbs, *The Syrian-Lebanese Immigration into Southeast Texas and their Progeny*, USA, Lamar University, 1987, p. 44 – 47. Also see, J. M. Ansara, *Immigration and Settlement of the Syrians in USA*, USA, Harvard College, Honor Thesis, 1931.

56- Boutros Labaki, "L'émigration libanaise en fin de période ottomane (1850 – 1914)", *Op., Cit.*, p. 14.

57- Ernesto Capello, *Carrying the Past: the Syrio-Lebanese Emigration to Brazil*, Ernesto Capello, N.P., 2002, p. 3.

58- Jeff Lesser, "From pedlars to proprietors: Lebanese, Syrian and Jewish immigrants to Brazil", in *The Lebanese in the World: A Century of Immigration*, United Kingdom, The Center for Lebanese Studies, Oxford, 1992, p. 395 – 401.

Moreover, aspiration for freedom appeared to be one major issue. Hitti affirms that “hardly a Syrian writer in English or Arabic, in discussing emigration, fail to refer to his desire of the Syrian to live his life free and unhampered from political restraints as the chief motive for his coming into the United States.”<sup>59</sup> This aspiration for freedom was not only emancipated in the United States, Canada, Argentina, Brazil and other Latin American countries offered the right free atmosphere. Migrants played a prominent role in supporting Lebanon’s independence under the French mandate and later on for its complete independence in 1943.<sup>60</sup> This freedom of speech can be also noticed through the number of Newspapers written in Arabic and/or in the language of the emigrants’ residence. The number of published newspapers and magazines surpassed that of the ones in Lebanon.<sup>61</sup>

Furthermore, Chiha asserts that “the ingenuity of the Near Easterner is a basic element in his assets – an integral part of his stock-in-trade; and this ingenuity becomes effective only outside or above regulations and restraint.”<sup>62</sup> While pull factors are diverse and relevant to the receiving

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59- Philip Hitti, *The Syrians in America, Op. Cit.*, p. 51.

60- See Documents 146, 197, 228, 305, 377, 407, 410, 419, 451 in Jean Charaf alii., *Le démantèlement de l'Empire ottoman et les préludes du mandat : 1914 – 1919*, Tome I, Beyrouth, Les Éditions Universitaires du Liban, 2003.

61- The United States of America counted alone in 1923, 9 newspapers and magazines; see Philip Hitti, *The Syrians in America, Op. Cit.*, p. 135.

62- Michel Chiha, *Lebanon at Home and Abroad*, Translated from French by Leo Arnold and Jean Montegu, Beirut, The Publications of the Cenacle, 1966, p. 119.

county, this study will limit itself to global and general pull factors common to most of the countries at that time.

## 2<sup>nd</sup>) Second Wave (1920 – 1943)

During World War One, emigration from Lebanon was halted due to the sea blockade of the Syrian, Lebanese and Palestinian shores as they were part of the Ottoman Sultanate fighting against the allies.<sup>63</sup> However, as soon as war ended in 1918, emigration resumed up until 1920, with the declaration of San Remo and the enactment of the French mandate on Syria and Lebanon.<sup>64</sup> This new regime inspired confidence and peace of mind to all Lebanese. Migration flow started to decrease and large numbers of returning migrants were registered by the mandatory power.<sup>65</sup> Nevertheless, this new balance was not long to be reversed. 1925 marked the beginning of the Druses insurrections in Syria that rapidly spread in different areas of Lebanon resulting in huge loss notably in the Christian town of Rashaya.<sup>66</sup> These insurrections triggered migration once more as France failed to prevent such a destructive incident and then failed even more by not responding to it correctly.<sup>67</sup>

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63- Georges T. Labaki, *The Maronites in the United States*, Lebanon, Notre Dame University of Louaize Press, 1993, p. 14, and Louis Ferkh, *Op. Cit.*, p. 35, and Alixa Naff, *Op. Cit.*, p. 142.

64- Eliane N. Fersan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 39 – 49.

65- *Ibid.*, p. 48.

66- *M.A.E., rapport du Haut Commissariat sur la situation de la Syrie et du Liban à la Société des Nations pour l'année 1925*, p. 7 – 31.

67- France faced criticism and blame from Lebanese newspapers of the *Mahjar*; this can be observed in numerous Lebanese newspapers published outside Lebanon.

Lebanon's economy was also fragile at that time. Devastated by World War I, both Lebanon and France had hard time to run properly again their economy.<sup>68</sup> France's help for Lebanon as a mandatory power had positive effects on the population and the economy. However they were not enough as France was suffering from the loss of 10% of its active population and 1/6 of its national revenue, inflation and internal debts.<sup>69</sup>

On the political level, large waves of complaints were started against the "fictive democracy" professed by the French as Lebanese were eager for freedom and more power. The French mandate was not what they had hoped for.<sup>70</sup> Rural exodus continued to be the main trigger for emigration. Once more, Beirut is overcrowded and jobs were even rarer.

France's serious attempts to reorient the Lebanese economy towards agricultural and industrial sectors remained fruitless. The tertiary sector has attracted all capitals and investments as tourism and trade generated more income.

In general, this second wave was not as big as the first one as Lebanon's overall situation was much better, and migration laws and quotas in the United States of America for instance reduced notably the number of legitimate immigrants.<sup>71</sup> In 1924, 6371 emigrated while 6683 returned

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68- France's internal political and economical crisis affected her foreign policy; see Georges et Janine Hémeret, *L'Histoire des Présidents*, France, Editions Morena, 1995, p. 79 – 108.

69- *Ibid.*, p. 79 – 108.

70- Eliane N. Fersan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 41.

71- Nabih Kanaan-Atallah, *Op. Cit.*, p. 74.

whereas 3727 emigrated in 1927 and 5320 returned.<sup>72</sup> However, the scale was not always in favor of returns, the migration flow was somewhat halted or postponed.

### 3<sup>rd</sup>) Third Wave (1943 – 1975)

“The migratory trends slowed down after the independence as the new liberal political and economic climate of the country made it prosper.”<sup>73</sup>

However, Ferkh enumerates eloquently a series of incidents and crisis that broke off the secure environment and stability in Lebanon.

Stability was threatened in March 1950 when the Lebanese government refused to comply with Syria’s wish to accede to full economic and financial union with Lebanon.<sup>74</sup> The resignation of President Bechara Al-Khoury in 1952 provoked by a high cost of living and unemployment shook the political and economical stability of the country.<sup>75</sup> While Lebanon enjoyed more stability and growth under the Presidency of Camille Chamoun, he suffered in 1956 from a regional conflict: the Sinai-Suez crisis.<sup>76</sup> A series of political crisis both local and regional had for victims the fragile economy of Lebanon and its frail political regime that helped feed the migration flow once more. Persecution and discrimination

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72- *Ibid.*, p. 74.

73- Louis Ferkh, *Op. Cit.*, p. 84.

74- W. B. Fisher, No. 3, “Lebanon, Physical and Social Geography”, *The Middle East and North Africa Year Book*, London, Europa Publications, 1989, p. 594, cited in Louis Ferkh, *Op. Cit.*, p. 83 – 84.

75- *Ibid.*, p. 84.

76- *Ibid.*, p. 84.

were also a cause for migration especially after the unsuccessful attempt of a coup d'état by a member of the National Socialist Party on December 31, 1961.<sup>77</sup>

The beginning of the Arab Israeli war in 1967 marked the beginning of an escalating situation in Lebanon despite the fact that Lebanon did not participate in it. Starting 1968 onwards, daily Israeli raids plagued Southern Lebanon in an effort to crush the increasing activities of the PLO guerillas on Northern Israel.<sup>78</sup> 22000 Lebanese Southerners left for Beirut and various Arab countries. However, the oil boom in the Gulf States constituted in 1973 a tempting pull factor while Lebanon encountered serious clashes between the PLO and the Lebanese army that same year. The country was split in two camps, 164.000 Lebanese left Lebanon between 1973 – 1974: 72.000 to Arab countries, 64.000 to Europe, 21 000 to the United States of America, 1600 to Australia, 61.000 to Africa and 17 000 to Asian countries.<sup>79</sup>

Despite all that, emigration from Lebanon during this era did not have the same magnitude of that of the first wave. “During this period, migration had markedly begun to spread to the Arab Gulf area for employment opportunities. Students’ emigration to the United States of America and

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77- Founded in the 1930s by Antoine Saade, the aim of this party was to unite several Arab countries into a Greater Syria, see Kamal S. Salibi, “The Lebanese Identity”, *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 6, No. 1, Nationalism and Separatism (1971), p. 71 – 86.

78- Louis Ferkh, *Op. Cit.*, p. 86.

79- See, *AL-Minbar*, No. 49, March 1990, p. 16, cited in Louis Ferkh, *Op. Cit.*, 86 – 87.

Europe also increased steadily as the young sought a better education abroad.<sup>80</sup>

### **3. Recent Lebanese Migration 1975-2000**

The war period (1975 – 1989) and the post war era (1990 – 2000) marked a new milestone in the history of Lebanese migration. During the 15 years of war, approximately 1 million Lebanese<sup>81</sup> left their country in search of safety, asylum, security and continuance. Additionally, more migrated after the Taëf agreement due to political restraints, the Syrian ward on Lebanon, the economical crisis and corruption. While most migrants at the beginning of the civil war returned a year after the situation had settled in 1976,<sup>82</sup> and a large number kept going back and forth, migration after 1985 became somewhat permanent.

The following section will expose the causes of this migration wave and then present some facts and figures keeping in mind that the available official data is not accurate and the accurate one is not open to the public for political or sectarian reasons.

#### **▪ Causes of Migration 1975 – 1989**

War is, without any doubt, the most important migration factor during 1975 – 1989. However, this migration wave was also resulting of other

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80- Nabil Harfouch, *The Lebanese in the World, Documents and censuses*, Vol. III, Beirut, N.P., 1978, p. 24.

81- Louis Ferkh, *Op. Cit.*, p. 88.

82- Boutros Labaki, "L'émigration libanaise en fin de période ottomane (1850 – 1914)", *Op. Cit.*, p. 607.

factors which are in fact directly or indirectly linked to the effects of the war.

Sectarian fighting and invasions caused massive population displacement, according to Joseph Khoreich – Centre Catholique d'Information – up to 800.000 were displaced in the country including: 450.000 i.e. 100.000 families who have not yet returned to their native region, more than 2/3 of them are Christians.<sup>83</sup>

Political crisis, as a result of the war, had also its impact on pushing Lebanese towards the *Mahjar*<sup>84</sup> as every time the fighting stopped, political struggle resumed, leaving no room for dreams and hopes for a better future for those who were planning on securing a better living standard.<sup>85</sup>

The economical crisis had both its impact on pushing Lebanese to migrate and orientate them to new destinations.

As a matter of fact, “the war caused the destruction and closure of businesses and also led to the relocation of foreign and local firms abroad. As a result, the national income per capita started gradually to slide down.”<sup>86</sup> The devaluation of the Lebanese Lira led to a drastic reduction of the imports, while Lebanese imported 80% of its consumption needs, leading to shortages in many critical sectors when Lebanon was divided

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83- Joseph Khoreich, *Results of the Lebanese War 1975 – 1997*, Liban, Centre Catholique d'Information, N.D., p. 7.

84- *Mahjar* is from the Arabic word *hajara*, “to emigrate”. *Mahjar* connotes the place to which people emigrate, and will be translated in this paper as “Diaspora”.

85- Louis Ferkh, *Op. Cit.*, p. 92 – 93.

86- *Ibid.*, p. 92 – 93.



into two cut classes: the richer and the poorer, eliminating by then the middle class.<sup>87</sup>

On the other hand, the economic crisis gendered an increase in unemployment rates: 35 % in 1987 while the rate was only at 5.4% in 1970. This same period corresponded with the end of the oil boom, and the high cost of the Iraq-Iran war led to a drop in the major traditional source of work and income for Lebanese. This led to the return of thousands of Lebanese migrant workers: 640.000 Lebanese left the Gulf between 1980 and 1987, quite few of them returned to their homeland.<sup>88</sup>

Apart from the economic and war crisis, a series of factors played tremendously in increasing the number of migrants. The breakdown of the educational system, which had reached its summit between 1965 and 1975 by attracting many foreign students, had a direct impact on youth and family migration as Lebanese traditionally give high standard education much importance. Individuals sought higher education in the United States of America and Europe while some families moved to Canada, US or Europe to secure proper education for their children.<sup>89</sup>

To the same effect, family ties are a basic ingredient of Lebanese ethnicity. Family reunion remains a common reason for migration.

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87- *Ibid.*, p. 92 – 93.

88- Salim Nasr, “The Political Economy of the Lebanese Conflict”, *Politics and the Economy in Lebanon*, edited by Nadim Shehadi and Bridget Hormey, Oxford, The Center for Lebanese Studies, The Center of Near and Middle Eastern Studies, SOAS, University of London, p. 42 – 50.

89- Louis Ferkh, *Op. Cit.*, p. 90 – 95.

Thousands joined their relatives overseas. Finally, Reunion Act (or similar acts) which most countries have passed allowed several families to reunite.

Lastly, the terrorist actions in Beirut had led to World Wide vigilance, tight security and controls affecting the Lebanese wherever they may be. This also made it more difficult for them to obtain visas and to travel.<sup>90</sup> There, a large number of Lebanese worked on acquiring a new nationality and paid what it cost for it.

### ▪ Causes of Migration 1990 – 2000

When the situation settled in 1990, many thought that the large construction and rebuilding site that Lebanon constituted will not only halt the huge drain, but also pull Lebanese migrants to return and invest again in Lebanon.

However, the economic crisis due to inflation, corruption,<sup>91</sup> and an outrageous increase in public debts reduced the migrants' confidence in the governments that took over the economical management of the country since 1990.<sup>92</sup> In international surveys, Lebanon occupied the sixty third position among corrupted nations sharing this position with Thailand and the Seychelles.<sup>93</sup> Antoine Haddad, in his study on the poor in Lebanon states that “in Lebanon’s modern history, a large segment of the population

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90- *Ibid.*, p. 100.

91- “ Furthermore, the gap between rich and poor has widened since Hariri took office, sowing grassroots dissatisfaction over the skewed distribution of reconstruction's benefits and leading the government to shift its focus from rebuilding infrastructure to improving social conditions.” In <http://www.wlcu.com.au/geography.htm>

92- See, “Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index 2006 , *Transparency International*, 2006, p. 5.

93- *Ibid.*, p. 5.

has been affected by deprivation.”<sup>94</sup> 28% of Lebanese families are estimated to live below the absolute poverty line, while, of these, 7.25% live below the extreme poverty line.<sup>95</sup> Furthermore, unemployment had its own impact on migration, “while the nation supplies 50 000 new job seekers a year, the Lebanese market demands a maximum of 35 000.”<sup>96</sup>

The Syrian occupation had also its negative impact on preventing return migration. Additionally, large number of Lebanese sought asylum in Canada, France, the United States of America and Australia. Unofficial and official numbers state that over 300 000 Lebanese migrated in the last 10 years in search of a new identity and better opportunities, and mostly in search for freedom.<sup>97</sup>

A large number migrated to the Arab Gulf while Saudi Arabia ‘pulled’ over 80% of Lebanese working force in the Gulf.<sup>98</sup> However, the demand for foreign labor in the Gulf countries has declined in recent years. Following the Libyan decision to expel workers at short notice, specialists began to ponder over the future of oil-producing countries and over the question of how best to deal with immigration. On another hand, Gulf

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94- Antoine Haddad, “The Poor in Lebanon,” *The Lebanon Report*, No. 3 Summer 1996, Lebanon, The Lebanese Center for Policy Studies, 1996, p. 1.

95- *Ibid*, p. 2.

96- Kamal Hamdan, “Economist slams policies”, *Alternative-Online*, Lebanon, October 2003, Issue 07, Volume 01, p. 3A.

97- Christian Emigration Report: Lebanon and Syria, New York, The Catholic Near East Welfare Association. (CNEWA), January 2002, p. 3.

98- Marwan Maaouia, “The Lebanese Emigration to the Gulf and Saudi Arabia”, in *The Lebanese in the World: A Century of Emigration*, United Kingdom, The Center of Lebanese Studies, 1992, p. 651 – 659.

countries are willing to employ workers without rights or guarantees of protection, namely Asian workers. This had reduced reasonably the number of Lebanese workers in the Gulf.<sup>99</sup>

The episodic attacks of Israel on Lebanon, the Qana massacres and the continuous assault on civilian infrastructure resulted in strengthening the global mistrust and feeling of unrest among residents and migrants.

### ▪ Migrants' Destinations and Settlements (1975 – 2000)

“Unlike before, the reasons for emigrating and the destinations were numerous and varied. The 1975 war crisis has forced the Lebanese to go wherever they could be welcomed.”<sup>100</sup> While generally they would join family members and settled relatives that could help them acquire a stay permit.<sup>101</sup>

One characteristic of this migration wave is that most its migrants were the intellectuals, the educated, the professionals, the experts, the workforce and the students as the requirements for entry visas became higher.<sup>102</sup>

Cyprus was for most migrants a safe haven in which constituted a gateway to the world. By 1984, 13.000 Lebanese had settled in Cyprus. In July 1989, they numbered 40.000 Lebanese. This estimated number of

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99- *Ibid*, p. 658.

100- Louis Ferkh, *Op. Cit.*, p. 105.

101- Choghig Kasparian, *L'entrée active des jeunes libanais dans la vie active et l'émigration, Les Libanais émigrés depuis 1975*, Tome III, Beyrouth, Presses de l'Université Saint Joseph, 2003, p. 20 – 29.

102- *Ibid*, p. 7 – 11.

Lebanese permanently settled in Cyprus averages 10.000 but periodically rises as the fighting intensifies in Lebanon.<sup>103</sup>

Europe received businessmen and their families, consultants, students and firms.<sup>104</sup> North and South America, Canada and Australia received mainly engineers, doctors, specialists and relatives seeking permanent residence.<sup>105</sup>

#### **Emigration of Economically active Lebanese to EU and America (1975 – 1983)<sup>106</sup>**

<b>PROFESSIONS</b>	<b>NUMBERS</b>
Technicians and Craftsman	33.000
Unspecialized Workers	16.000
Professional People	6.000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>55.000</b>

Africa and West Africa in particular attracted businessmen and their families. However, in this case, migrants continued to consider themselves temporary residents owing to sociological and ecological factors which do not encourage full integration. Not to mention the political instability of many African countries that strengthens the Lebanese attitude towards permanent settlement in Africa.

103- See, *AL-Minbar*, No. 49, March 1990, p. 12, cited in Louis Ferkh, *Op. Cit.*, p. 107.

104- Boutros Labaki, "Lebanese Emigration during the War (1975 – 1989)", *Op. Cit.*, p. 610 – 621.

105- "According to a census carried out by the Lebanese government in 1987, between 1975 and 1987, 73 engineers (agricultural, mechanical, electrical, electronics, builders, urban engineers and interior decorators) had migrated to France, 256 had gone to the US, 192 to Canada, 81 to Australia and 20 to the UK," Boutros Labaki, "Lebanese Emigration during the War (1975 – 1989)", *Op. Cit.*, p. 610 – 621.

106- *Ibid.*, p. 613.

The number of Lebanese migrants working in Gulf States rose from 50.000 in 1970 to 89.000 in 1975 and 210.000 in 1979/80. By 1980, the migrant workers reached 34.6% of the total local population.<sup>107</sup> Relatively few businesses were able to settle in the Gulf due to various restrictions and sponsorship rules. A large number of managers, engineers, professionals, skilled workers and laborers were active in the Gulf. Lebanese migrants in the Gulf were also temporary sojourners. Here, it is important to note that while the largest amounts of remittances were sent from the Americas in the 1880s and the first two decades of 20<sup>th</sup> century, remittances now are mostly supplied by Lebanese in Africa and the Gulf countries as the latter had to secure a return to Lebanon had they not managed to acquire a foreign passport during their stay abroad.<sup>108</sup>

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107- Salim Nasr, *Op. Cit.*, p. 44.

108- Louis Ferkh, *Op. Cit.*, p. 108 – 112.

## Chapter Two

### Brain Drain as an Expanding Lebanese Reality

#### 1. Brain Drain in perspective

The concept of brain drain in the context of developing countries generally refers to the permanent or long-term international emigration of skilled people who have been the subject of considerable educational investment by their own societies.<sup>109</sup> The available literature points out that the implied transfer of skills and knowledge from the country of origin to the host country is a serious loss for the source country given the crucial role of human resources in the growth of these countries. Recent discussions have increasingly referred to migration or mobility of “highly skilled persons”, which does not imply a pre-conceived view (drain) on the impact of the movement.<sup>110</sup> OECD has used the term *HRST – Human Resources in Science and Technology* – interpreted broadly to encompass wide range skills in disciplines including the physical and life sciences, engineering, the social sciences, health, education and business.<sup>111</sup>

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109- See, W. A. Cornelius, Thomas J. Espenshade and al., Eds. 2001, *The International Migration of the Highly Skilled: Demand, Supply, and Development Consequences in Sending and Receiving Countries*, CCIS Anthology Series, No. 1, San Diego, University of California – San Diego.

110- L. B. Lowell and A. M. Findlay, “Migration of Highly Skilled Migrants from East Asia, IED Discussion Paper 120,” *Research Review Spring 2002*, Boston, The Institute for Economic Development at Boston University, 2002, p. 35.

111- L. Auriol and J. Sexton, “Human resources in science and technology: Measurement issues and international mobility, *International Mobility of the Highly Skilled*, Paris – France, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2002, p., 13 – 38.

The brain drain debates have a long history spanning about four decades. We can distinguish two phases: a) The sixties and the seventies when movements of highly skilled persons from the developing countries (South) to the developed world (North) received considerable emphasis; b) The current phase of globalization. In the first phase, there was extensive discussion among academics, researchers, and UN agencies on the consequences of the brain drain and means of compensation.<sup>112</sup>

The second phase of interest in skilled labor migration starts from the early 1990s with rapid advances in globalization and phenomenal growth in information and communication technologies (ICT). However, there are differences in the context of this debate between the two periods. First, the current mobility of skills in a context of globalization and proliferation of information technology. Second, the later period coincides with the transition to market-oriented economies in most parts of the world, dramatically so in the case of the former Soviet bloc. Third, modern movements are primarily in the area of temporary or contact or circular migration whereas concerns in the earlier brain drain debate related to permanent or settler migration. Finally there is a shift in the current phase in

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112- Jagdish Bhagwati, *The Brain drain and Taxation – Theory and Empirical Analysis*, Amsterdam, North-Holland Publishing Company, 1976. And UNCTAD, *The reverse transfer of technology: economic effects of the outflow of trained personnel from developing countries*, New York, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, United Nations, 1975. And UNCTAD, *The reverse transfer of technology: a survey of its main features, causes and policy implications: study*, New York, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, United Nations, 1979.



the composition of skill mobility with emphasis on IT workers and knowledge workers.

It must be stressed that the brain drain is not confined to developing countries only. It can occur at different levels within the developed world also. There is an extensive literature on the brain drain from Canada to the US, which has caused serious concern to the Canadian authorities. Movements from third world countries to Canada, particularly from developing countries, are making up for the loss. Similarly Europe, particularly the UK, has long been losing skills to the United States of America. The magnet or the epicenter of movement has been the US.<sup>113</sup>

While Canada and Europe are compensating the brain drain, Lebanon until now has not been able to reverse the equation. The following chapter will discuss the causes of brain drain and impact on the Lebanese society and economy. Then we shall attempt to suggest ways of reversing the equation turning brain drain into brain gain.

## **2. Causes of Lebanese Brain drain**

Lebanese brain drain became a phenomenon in the past 30 years. While prominent Lebanese figures had emerged in the early 1900s from the *Mahjar*, i.e., Gibran Khalil Gibran, Mikhael Nouaimeh, Hassan Kamel Al-Sabbah, Antoun Saade recent brain drain has a fatal effect on the Lebanese society as the emigrants' profile changed dramatically from the

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113- T. Straubhaar and M. R. Wolberg, "Brain drain and brain gain in Europe: an evaluation of the East-European migration to Germany", *Jahrbuch Fur Nationaloekonomie Und Statistik*, 218, Germany, N.P., 1999, p. 507 – 604.

poor, illiterate, unskilled bachelor to a highly skilled, middle classed university or at least school graduate bachelor.

A recent study conducted by Choghig Kasparian<sup>114</sup> – Saint Joseph University, Beirut – states that approximately half of the Lebanese emigrants have a baccalaureate or a university degree<sup>115</sup> of which 25.4% are university graduates and 23.6% are school or vocational schools graduates.

While examining the statistical study and surveys conducted by Kasparian, one can clearly extract the character of the Lebanese brain drain and the pattern it has been taking in the past 30 years knowing that Kasparian states clearly that between 1996 and 2001 migration outflows have become more substantial and increasing, 26.6% of the emigrants that left Lebanon in the 1996 – 2001 era had actually left between 1975 and 2001.<sup>116</sup>

Shedding the light on the following figures is very revealing: among university graduates emigrants, 52.1% are Lebanese universities graduates, 24.3% are American or Canadian universities graduates and 19.7% are European universities graduates. 28.9% studied engineering and technology, 20.2% business, 14.4% medicine, 13.8% sciences, math or informational technology, 10.6% literature and human sciences, 6.1% law

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114- Choghig Kasparian, *Op. Cit.*, p. 12.

115- *Ibid.*, p. 20 – 21.

116- *Ibid.*, p. 14.

and political sciences, 2.6% are technicians and 3.4% are from other unspecified fields.<sup>117</sup>

When asked for the reasons behind their migration, the answers were as follows:

<b>41.3%</b>	Looking for a job
<b>10.9%</b>	Looking for better opportunities
<b>17.1%</b>	Due to corruption, political situation and restrains, social bounds and economical regression
<b>5.3%</b>	Due to war
<b>9.2%</b>	To study abroad
<b>2.9%</b>	To obtain foreign nationality
<b>1/5</b>	For family reunion

Thus, one can easily conclude that reasons and causes of migration have not changed a lot, Lebanese still migrate for reasons related to political and economical difficulties that result in unemployment and a general mood of dissatisfaction.<sup>118</sup>

One important factor has become more prominent: studying abroad can be also attributed to the relatively slow development of the educational sector affected by years of war. Lack of research centers and facilities for graduate students drive most of them to pursue post doctoral studies and opportunities abroad, notably in the US and in Canada. That said, the major change of aspect of the recent migration is the migrants' profile.

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117- *Ibid.*, p. 12 – 13.

118- *Ibid.*, p. 20 – 21.

In developing and explaining causes of brain drain let's keep in mind that "no one will have more light-heartedly without a cause. Most people prefer their home countries and will stay if conditions are barely tolerable."<sup>119</sup>

### ▪ **Political, Socio-Economical Causes of Brain Drain**

"The vicious circle of deterioration in the Lebanese economy, provoked the youth to leave their homeland and go to Western Europe and the US where not only they could find decent jobs and incomes, but they could enjoy freedom of expression."<sup>120</sup> Young men also escaped military service through emigration.<sup>121</sup>

The "Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index [which] ranks countries in terms of the degree to which corruption is perceived to exist among public officials and politicians"<sup>122</sup> gave Lebanon, in 2006, the 6th position among most corrupted countries.

On the other hand, while almost half of Lebanese emigrated out of unemployment, it was proven that unemployment was a result of poverty. As a matter of fact, there is a close relation between poverty and unemployment "in a country where wage earners account for two-thirds of

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119- Andrea Demuth, "Some Conceptual Thoughts on Migration Research", in *Theoretical and Methodological Issues in Migration Research*, England, edited by B. Aguin, 2000, p. 21.

120- Kamal Hamdan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 3A.

121- Fadia Kiwan, "La dimension politique et sociale des migrations au Liban, " in *Mediterranean Migration 2005 Report*, Liban, European Commission – MEDA program, 2005, p. 189.

122- See, "Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index 2006 , *Op. Cit.*, p. 9.

the total work force”<sup>123</sup> and where unemployment compensation is rarely provided, the loss of a job can mean the cutting off of a family’s principal, and often only, source of livelihood.<sup>124</sup> Poverty can be looked at as both a result and cause of unemployment. In fact, the lack of productive assets often prevents the poor from launching small or medium sized projects. On the contrary, Lebanese could find these facilities abroad which urge them to migrate.

Furthermore, several economical sectors are not well exploited in Lebanon; for example “the number of agricultural plots in Lebanon is estimated at 1 million, while only 90 000 people work in agriculture. This suggests that, on average, there is one person for every 11 plots, which makes agriculture a largely unprofitable venture at the national level.”<sup>125</sup>

Needless to say that attempts to re-launch the industrial sector had failed as more factories closed due to bankruptcy, and impossibility of competing with foreign merchandises. Add to this a 10.6% inflation rate that has paralyzed Lebanon’s economy growth and made it more dependent in spending more money and adding more debts to stabilize the national currency rates at LL 1.500 for every 1\$.

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123- *The National Report to the International Summit for Social Development*, Beirut, Republic of Lebanon, February 1995, p. 15.

124- Antoine Haddad, *Op. Cit.*, p. 3.

125- *Ibid.*, p. 3 – 4.

On another level, according to statistics, 500 000 people – predominantly Christians – were displaced during the war,<sup>126</sup> among them 75% were estimated to live below the absolute poverty line.<sup>127</sup> Furthermore, the Syrian ward and occupation and the absence of freedom and the feeling of depression, mostly among Christians, and the political persecution<sup>128</sup> motivated 17.1% to emigrate.

In short, migration genders migration, and brain drain genders more brain drain as the success stories and the hope for a better secured future is always there amid the young who constitute the large portion of emigrants. While government policies and attempts, if any, to reverse the equation are yet to be rewarded, we shall attempt to expose new approaches and possibilities in this effect.

#### ▪ Migrants' Profile

Migration can generate substantial welfare gains for migrants and their families as well as for the countries of origin and of destination; the skilled hard-working Armenian migrants to Lebanon is one good example.

According to the World Bank, official estimates account the money sent home by migrants, referred to as remittances<sup>129</sup>, as an important source

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126- Fadia Kiwan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 189.

127- Antoine Haddad, *Op. Cit.*, p. 3.

128- Those who suffered from political or ethnical persecution were anti-syrian Christians and what was left of the Lebanese Jews.

129- "Remittance refers to the portion of migrant income that, in the form of either funds or goods, flows back into the country of origin, primarily to support families back home. The greater share of these largely monetary flows benefits developing countries. In the last few decades the volume of migrants' remittances worldwide has risen steadily (in nominal and

of extra income for their families and for developing countries since it represented more than twice the size of international aid flows in 2005.<sup>130</sup> In its recent history, Lebanon has witnessed important migration flows, which had a substantial impact on its population. Let's keep in mind 3 important factors:

1. The economic impact of migration varies from country to country;
2. We lack basic data on migration and on remittances, which hinders predicting the impact of policy changes, which underlines the need for better data and more research;
3. Migration has social and political implications that may be just as important as the economic analysis.

Concerning the Lebanese case, the last official census was conducted in 1932, which makes it impossible to have accurate data on the Lebanese population (sectarian, religious, gender, distribution, emigrants). Moreover, for various political reasons, the available database can often not be consulted.

Tracking down the Lebanese in the *Mahjar* is a very complex operation since many of them adopt the nationality of the host country and

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relative terms) and currently represents a substantial source of revenue for many poor states." Stefanie Hertlein and Florin Vadean, "Remittances – A Bridge between Migration and Development?", in *Focus Migration – Policy Brief*, No. 5, September 2006, p. 1 – 8.

130- *Global Economic Prospects: Economic Implications of Remittances and Migration*, New York, The World Bank, 34320, 2006, p. Xi.

therefore declare the latter while filling census reports.<sup>131</sup> This naturally distorts statistics, along with the fact that the available accessible figures are those provided by the Sûreté Générale and the General Department of Civil Aviation (International Airport of Beirut).

According to Kasparian's study on migrations' demography, 8% of residents in Lebanon are foreign immigrants, whereas 7% of Lebanese are returning migrants.<sup>132</sup> Here we should note that these figures do not represent the reality, since they do not account for Syrian labor until the end of the Syrian occupation in 2005.

As for the residents' profile, it is important to note that delivered working permits and renewed contracts just give an estimate of how much foreign labor is being registered upon entry, and disregards moonlighting. Let us add that Syrians did not require working permits since they were considered to be temporary workers not to mention the Palestinians, being temporary residents, were exempted from formalities of stay. Apart from the Palestinian refugees, other non-Lebanese residents, currently on Lebanese territory, are sojourners without intend to stay. Statistics related to working permits between 1997 and 2002 show an increase in the number of foreign labor in Lebanon, notably among Asian nationalities (Sri Lanka and Philippines).

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131- A. Hourani, "Introduction", *The Lebanese in the World: a century of Emigration*, United Kingdom, The Center of Lebanese Studies, 1992, p. 3 – 11.

132- Choghig Kasparian, "Liban: démographie et économie des migrations", in *Mediterranean Migration 2005 Report*, Liban, European Commission – MEDA program, 2005, p. 175.



The 2001 St Joseph University (USJ) of Beirut survey states that 6.8% of Lebanese residents have emigrated temporarily between 1975 and 2001.<sup>133</sup> This temporary emigration touched both men and women but at different ratios (8.4 % and 5.2 % respectively). The destinations of these temporary migrants were distributed as follows: 43.7% in the Arab countries, 18.7% in Eastern Europe, 14% in North America (most of them in Canada) and 9.5% in Africa. 26% of these emigrants returned after the civil war (1991-1995) and when the political situation settled more over the next 5 years, another 26.9% came back. Here it is important to note that both genders were equally represented.<sup>134</sup>

Furthermore, 46.2% of Lebanese households are considered to have at least one family member<sup>135</sup> residing abroad and having emigrated during the 1975-2001 period. The massive emigration flow had a visible impact on the structure of the Lebanese residents' demography and also on the labor market.

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133- Choghig Kasparian, *L'entrée active des jeunes libanais dans la vie active et l'émigration, Les Libanais émigrés depuis 1975, Op. Cit.*, p. 12.

134- *Ibid.*, p. 19.

135- "Actuellement, on estime que près de la moitié des ménages Libanais (42.2%) ont au moins un membre de leur famille qui réside à l'étranger et dont le départ définitif a eu lieu durant la période 1975 – 2001. La famille se définit comme les descendants et les ascendants du chef du ménage et/ou de son conjoint, et les frères et sœurs du chef du ménage et du conjoint." (Currently, it is estimated that about half of the Lebanese households (42.2 %) have at least a member of their family residing abroad and whose final departure took place during the period 1975 – 2001. The family is defined as the descendants and the ascending members of the household's head and/or his spouse, and the brothers and sisters of the household's head and his spouse), Choghig Kasparian, "Liban: démographie et économie des migrations," *Op. Cit.*, p. 177.

It is estimated that 900.000 Lebanese emigrated between 1975 and 1991.<sup>136</sup> This figure is not official but gives a margin to work with. Among the emigrants since 1975, males are twice as numerous as females.<sup>137</sup>

The age pyramid of the emigrants reflects the prevalence of the active population among the migrants and shows that most of them are between 25 and 39. In addition, the propensity to emigrate is more important among men than among women (64.4% and 35.6% respectively). Kasparian states in her recent study that for 180 male emigrants, 100 females left Lebanon. This ratio is even more important among the population aged 25 to 54, which explains the male deficit produced in the resident population.<sup>138</sup>

"Not all skilled migrants are in search of educational, economic or intellectual opportunities. Sometimes, they are forced to leave their homes as a result of war, or political, ethnic and religious persecution. The contribution of foreign skilled workers to economic growth and achievement in host countries, in particular to research, innovation and entrepreneurship, is increasingly recognized".<sup>139</sup> This can be observed all over the globe with people like Vénus Ghata-Khoury (poet residing since 1973 in France), Nicole Nehme Zalaquett (economist and lawyer residing in

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136- Boutros Labaki, "Maqasid al-hudjrat al-lubnāniyat ba'da 1990 (Lebanese migrants' destinations alter 1990), in *Hannon Revue Libanaise de Géographie*, Vol. XXV, Liban, 1999 – 2002, p. 94.

137- Choghig Kasparian, "Liban: démographie et économie des migrations," *Op. Cit.*, p. 177.

138- *Ibid.*, p. 177.

139- Mario Cervantes and Dominique Guellec, "The Brain drain: Old Myths, New Realities", in *The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Observer*, Paris, Directorate for Science, Technology and Industry, No. 230, May 2002, p. 35.

Chile), Habib Sabbagh (NASA scientist residing in the USA), Amin Maalouf (writer residing in France), Rafic Hariri (business tycoon born in Sidon), Gabriel Yared (composer residing in France), Mario Kassar (movie-industry executive residing in the USA), Carlos Ghosn (residing in France – President of Nissan Motor Company), Nicholas Hayek or “Mr. SWATCH” the Swiss Swatch watches industries owner and CEO (residing in Switzerland).

The decrease of the national income per capita, along with the devaluation of the Lebanese pound and the rising unemployment ratio added to the end of the oil boom forced many Lebanese to migrate in the last 15 years of the war crisis in order to escape fighting, poverty and unemployment, and to ensure a sound future for them and their children.<sup>140</sup>

On the other hand, internal migration of displaced minorities inside Lebanon, also transformed the country’s economy, once dependant on agriculture, tourism and services, one way or the other. Since 1968, more intensely in 1975 and forward on, the hard laborers, mostly field peasants Shiites of the South had to leave their fertile land escaping the Israeli repetitive destructive invasions of South Lebanon. Their major agricultural plantations of tobacco were destroyed; their banana, lemon and olive trees were left behind without possibility of benefiting from them. Their poverty augmented intensely after coming to settle in the southern suburbs of Beirut

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140- Louis Ferkh, *Op. Cit.*, p. 94 – 95, and Boutros Labaki, “Lebanese Emigration during the War (1975 – 1989), *Op. Cit.*, p. 605 – 626.

doing minor industrial work and retail businesses that did not benefit them as needed nor, most importantly, benefited the country's economy that once depended on these skills to 'feed' the Arab country's populations. Another major national economic loss from this displacement was due to the fact that many of these young men joined the army or other public institution without any actual need for them in these institutions but just because of some political arrangement, probably better described as corruption, that coasted the country's economy millions of dollars in spending without any real return but only added to the inflation, negative economic growth, monetary value degradation and some major drops in the National GDP.<sup>141</sup>

More than half of the Lebanese population lived in Beirut and its suburbs.

That said, those of who had migrated into Africa, Australia and the United States in the first waves of Israeli invasions, had already started their businesses and knew major success and consequently, started 'pulling' their family members and friends to come live and settle there as well. Their remittances to their native country, through their family members that remained in the country, are not officially accounted for, but major cities like Tyr, Bint-Jbeil and Jwayya knew, during the war and post-war periods, a boom in expanding into cosmopolitan cities, full of villas and nicely designed buildings and homes. The latest unofficial statistics claim more than 70% of Bint-Jbeil inhabitants alone live in or around Michigan in the

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141- See, Boutros Labaki, "Lebanese Emigration during the War (1975 – 1989), *Op. Cit.*, p. 605 – 626.

United States and send annually substantial remittances to their relatives back home.<sup>142</sup>

As most of the migrants' remittances were, historically, and still are, today, based on the familial relationship factor and that the phenomenon did not widely take the shape of investments, the social impact of these remittances on the national economy remained cornered, not wisely benefited from nor wisely used.<sup>143</sup>

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142- See, [www.bintjbeil.com](http://www.bintjbeil.com)

143- *Christian Emigration Report: Lebanon and Syria*, New York, The Catholic Near East Welfare Center (CNEWA), p. 2.

## Chapter Three

### Brain Drain vs. Brain Gain

#### 1. Reversing the Equation

The subject of reversing the equation of brain drain into a brain gain in Lebanon became a myth and an urban legend, a cultural subject and an inspirational source, that so many poets and singers chanted over and over. It's true that many Lebanese migrants returned to retire in Lebanon but not as many returned to live and invest in Lebanon. It is also true that a Ministry for Migrants<sup>144</sup> was recently created but it remained chained to serving political and religious parties more than serving the migrants affairs in general. Another semi-public institution founded by the Lebanese of the *Mahjar*, known as the 'Al-Djami'at al-Thaqāfiyat fī al-'ālam'<sup>145</sup> (Lebanese World Cultural Union), did not succeed of reaching and uniting the Lebanese Diaspora as its mission was supposed and intended to be. Ironically, this same institution that is supposed to reach the Lebanese Diaspora around the globe has no website!

Traditionally, encouraging the return migration has been viewed as a popular strategy to reverse the brain drain.<sup>146</sup> However, the right to leave

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144- The first Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Migrants was instituted in 1946. The departments of Migrants Affairs stayed a part of the Foreign Affairs Ministry until 1993, when the Ministry of Migrants (expatriates) was created.

145- Lebanese World Cultural Union, الجامعة الثقافية في العالم.

146- R. King, "Generalization from the History of Return Migration," in *Return Migration: Journey of Hope or Despair?*, International Organization for Migration, United Nations, Geneva, 2000, p. 300. Also see D. G. Papademetriou & Philip Martin, "Introduction" in *The Unsettled Relationship: Labor Migration and Economic Development*, N.P., 1991, p. 5.

one's country of origin and, the right to return to one's country is a fundamental human right. More has to be done than just encouraging or populating human rights if anything serious is to be done to attract or re-attract the migrants, the skilled ones in particular. Cerase wrote that beyond the fact that there is "extremely limited data on return migration", the most important motives or intentions for migrants to return to their countries, as is the case for Italian migrants who have returned in waves, were **a)** failure, **b)** conservatism, **c)** retirement and **d)** innovation, the latest reason being the most important to development in home countries.<sup>147</sup>

Ghosh gives more details about countries that have implemented programs to attract their expatriates back such as Turkey, Jamaica, the Republic of Korea, Taiwan and China, given the belief in the existence of high potential in return migration.<sup>148</sup> On the contrary, most Lebanese governments since the independence till our very day believed that the Lebanese migrants are just a source of income and remittances and little if nothing was done since to re-attract them back. During the late PM Hariri mandate, the Lebanese government tried, not seriously enough, to attract some skilled Lebanese migrants by offering them high positions in the public sector, a policy that was viewed by many opposition leaders being only a way to compensate some particular sect of migrants that were loyal

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147- F. P. Cerase, "Expectations and Reality: a Case Study of Return Migration from the United States to Southern Italy", in *International Migration Review*, Vol. 8, 1974, p. 2.

148- B. Ghosh, "Introduction", *Return Migration: Journey of Hope or despair?*, Geneva, International Organization for Migration, United Nations, 2000, p. Viii.

to PM Hariri himself and not to the country in general, taking into consideration that most of the returnees were in fact related to Hariri businesses worldwide with great fidelity to his person. In fact, none of the returnees is known to have invested in the country since their return but on the contrary, they used their skills and the high salaries they were collecting from the public sector, to invest abroad if not to say to have substantial amounts of money to be transferred out of the country.<sup>149</sup> On another hand, the credibility and trust in the Hariri governments was lost among Christian leaders when the said government opposed fiercely and intentionally their call to correct the Nationalization law by re-offering the Lebanese Christians migrants the right to have their nationality restored. This action enables the migrants to recuperate their Lebanese passports and travel freely back to Lebanon while enjoying the status of citizens which facilitates their investments procedures. These migrants could also easily send their children back so that they could interact freely with relatives, learn the language and retie the bonds with the homeland and revive their patriotic feelings.<sup>150</sup>

## **2. Remittances as a Development Tool**

In sending countries in the developing world, returnees can bring back valuable management experience, entrepreneurial skills and access to

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149- See, <http://stangoff.com/?p=333>

150- Over 13 million Lebanese and/or of Lebanese descent are believed to be living abroad, constituting the Lebanese *Mahjar*. The largest communities are found in Brazil, Mexico, Argentina and the United States. 75% of the Lebanese *Mahjar* are Christians.



global networks. They may even bring venture capital. But migrants from developing countries are generally more likely to stay in the host country than migrants from advanced countries.

What can governments do to address the causes of the brain drain? Developing centers of excellence for scientific research and framing the conditions for innovation and high tech entrepreneurship can make a country attractive to highly skilled workers, both from within the country and from outside. The task is not easy and it takes time but can provide higher education training, as well as academic employment and research opportunities. The risk of a brain drain is real. Yet with the right mix of policies and sustained international co-operation, several countries could, as one Indian official pointed out, see the “brain drain” be transformed into a “brain bank”.<sup>151</sup>

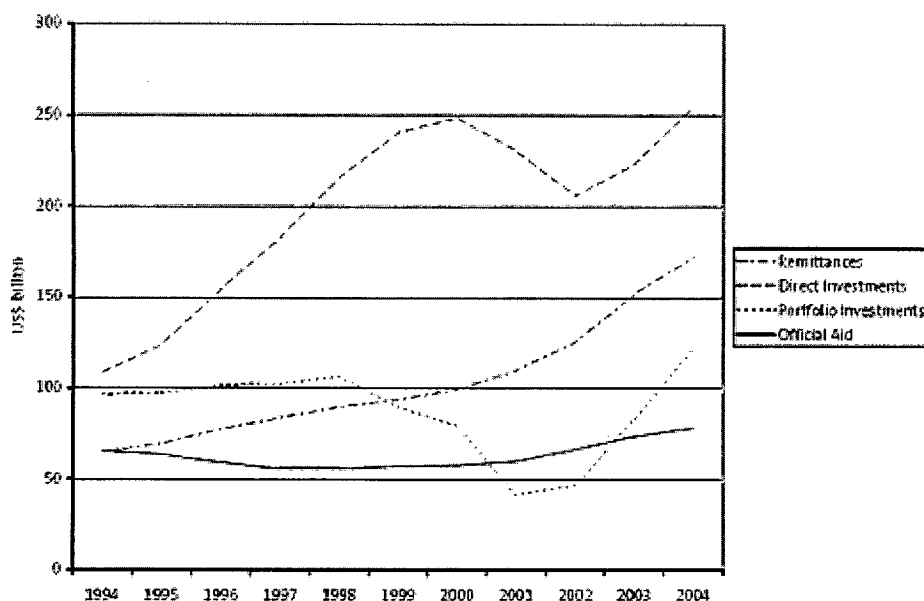
If remittances generally contribute to economic growth and promote access to financial services, still "migration should not be viewed as a substitute for economic development in the origin country – development ultimately depends on sound domestic economic policies".<sup>152</sup>

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151- Mario Cervantes and Dominique Guellec, *Op. Cit.*, p. 33.

152- Stefanie Hertlein and Florin Vadean, *Op. Cit.*, p. 1 – 8.

**Figure 1: Inflow of Capital to Developing Countries**



Source: IMF 2005 and World Development Indicators 2005

Unfortunately, this is not the case of Lebanon. The Hamburg Institute of International Economics (HWWI)<sup>153</sup> places Lebanon among the countries that depend greatly on the migrants' remittances in their economy policies, as we are about to explore.<sup>154</sup> In fact, in order to collect concrete data about migrants' remittances, the IMF defined three categories of remittances that should be taken into consideration; **1)** the compensations of employees residing abroad for less than 12 months and making transfers to their home countries of their earnings. **2)** the workers remittances being the value of monetary transfers sent back home by workers residing for more than 12 months, and finally **3)** migrants' transfers being the net wealth of migrants who move from one country of employment to another. The IMF

153- *Ibid.*, p. 3.

154- *Ibid.*, p. 3.

places Lebanon among the countries whose Central Banks do not clearly report such remittances but only declare those as “other transfers of other sectors” which clearly indicates that Lebanon considers officially the Lebanese migrants as a sector and an exploitable source of monetary funds for the Lebanese global economy.

So where does the money go and how much does it represent of national GDP? In the case of Lebanon, a small economy relatively to other developed countries; even to under development countries, the migrants’ remittances or the “other transfers of other sectors”, since the definitions are combined in the case of Lebanon, make a big percentage of the national economy.<sup>155</sup>

**Remittances as a % of GDP for selected countries (2004)**

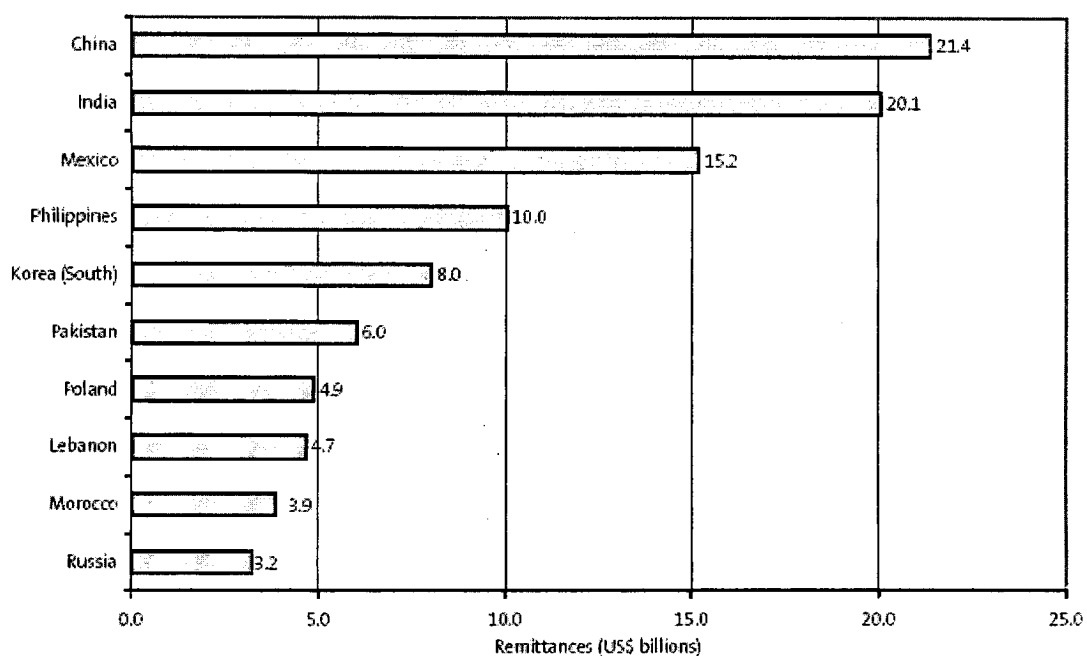
<b>Country</b>	<b>Percent of GDP</b>
<b>Lesotho</b>	26.5%
<b>Jordan</b>	22.8%
<b>Albania</b>	17%
<b>Nicaragua</b>	16.2%
<b>Yemen</b>	16.1%
<b>Lebanon</b>	<b>13.8%</b>
<b>Philippines</b>	8.9%

Source: Danish Institute for Development Studies (2004)

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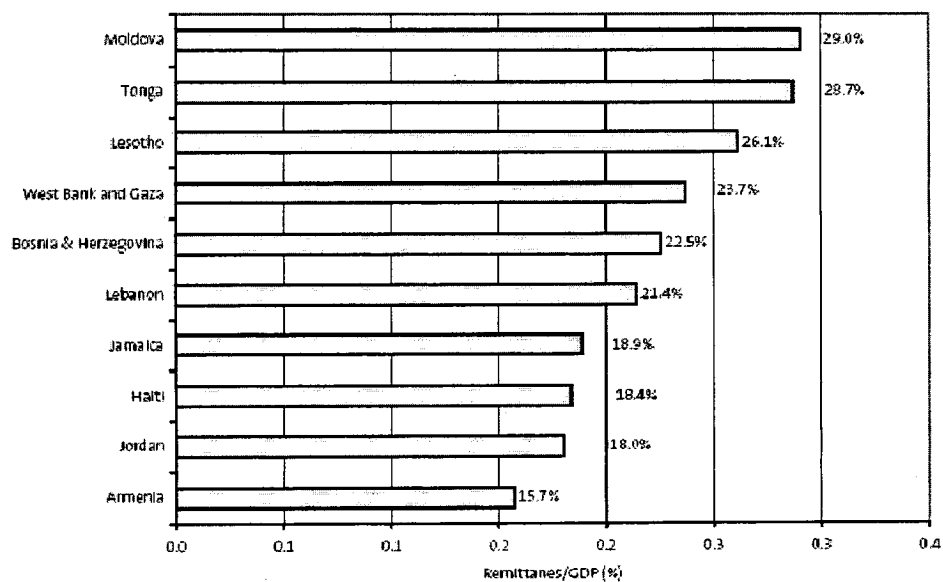
155- *Ibid.*, p. 1 – 8.

**Figure 2: Top 10 Remittance Receiving Countries in 2004 (nominal)**



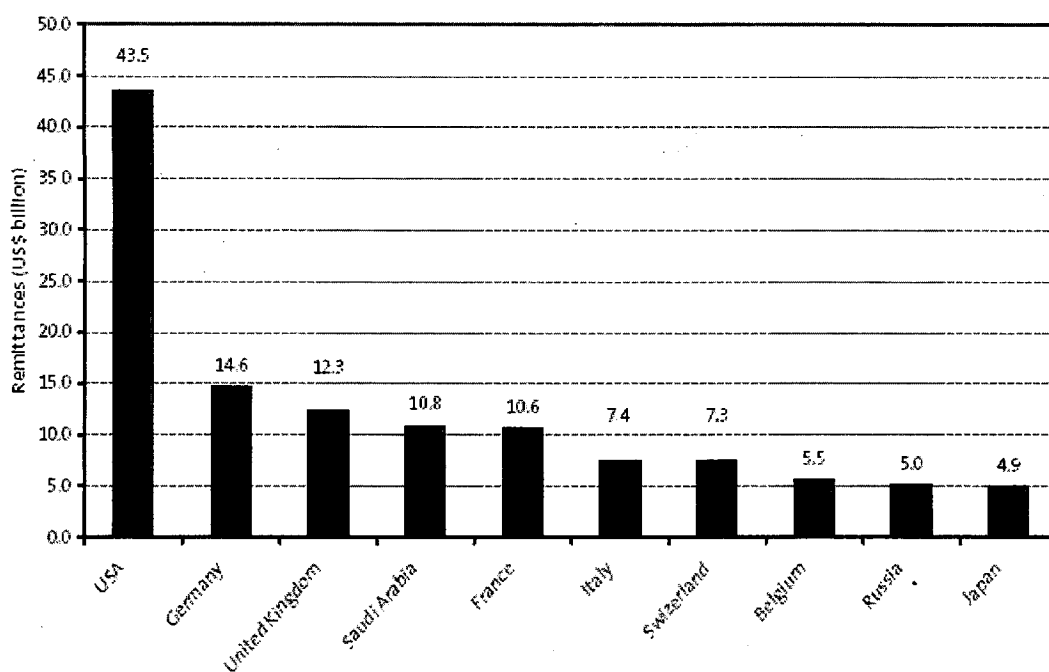
Source: IMF 2005 and the Central Bank of India

**Figure 3: Top 10 Remittance Receiving Countries in 2004 (percentage of GDP)**



Source: IMF 2005, the Central Bank of India and World Development Indicators 2005.

**Figure 4: Top 10 Remittance Source Countries**



Source: IMF 2005

That said, the Lebanese migrants' remittances, falling under any of the three categories explained earlier, regardless of the fact that they do represent a considerable percentage of the national GDP, were not able to become a source of national development on a large scale because of **1)** the post-war severe monetary inflation, **2)** the level of corruption in Lebanon, **3)** the decline of the remittances, **4)** the increasing number of foreign labor in Lebanon, a source to revert the remittances back to other countries, and finally because **5)** the remittances became a source to pay the interests on the fast growing national debt estimated today at approximately 42 billion dollars. In details:

COUNTRY	Indicators' Description	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Lebanon	Cash surplus/deficit (% of GDP)	-19.04	-15.56	-13.19	-13.32	-8.3	..
Lebanon	Foreign direct investment, net inflows (bop, current US\$)	297,800,000	249,300,000	257,300,000	358,000,000	288,000,000	..
Lebanon	GDP (current US\$)	16,678,610,000	17,065,340,000	18,462,360,000	19,984,280,000	21,866,160,000	22,210,410,000
Lebanon	GDP growth (annual %)	0.87	4.36	2.63	4.91	6.32	1
Lebanon	Gross capital formation (% of GDP)	20.32	23.02	18.39	20.32	21.26	20.06
Lebanon	Inflation, GDP deflator (annual %)	-2.81	-1.96	5.41	3.18	2.91	0.57
Lebanon	Long-term debt (DOD, current US\$)	7,315,400,000	9,788,400,000	14,530,100,000	15,474,200,000	18,205,900,000	..
Lebanon	Official development assistance and official aid (current US\$)	199,680,000	242,820,000	452,730,000	225,660,000	264,800,000	..
Lebanon	Present value of debt (% of GNI)	..	..	..	..	120.80	..
Lebanon	Workers' remittances and compensation of employees, received (US\$)	1,582,000,000	2,307,000,000	2,544,000,000	4,850,000,000	5,723,000,000	..

Source: World Development Indicators database. [Http://devdata.worldbank.org/data-query](http://devdata.worldbank.org/data-query)

1) The post-war monetary inflation, followed by a severe monetary devaluation and significant prices increases, was a major source of dissolving the remittances' value even when these remittances were generally in foreign currencies. To this effect, it has been stated that: "Lebanon benefits from its large, cohesive, and entrepreneurial Diaspora. Lebanese abroad send money home to help relatives pay for needs. In 1961 "a sample year, income from émigré remittances equaled 92 million Lebanese pounds, or 40 percent of all of Lebanon's foreign-earned income."<sup>156</sup>

Year <sup>157</sup>	Gross Domestic	US Dollar Exchange	Inflation Index (2000=100)
1980	14,000	3.43 Lebanese Pounds	0.071
1985	59,329	16.41 Lebanese Pounds	0.21
1990	1,973,000	695.20 Lebanese Pounds	18
1995	18,027,607	1,621.33 Lebanese	81
2000	25,143,000	1,507.46 Lebanese	100
2005	33,243,000	1,507.48 Lebanese	106

2) Lebanon was a prominent high profile on the index of corruption published annually by the global coalition against corruption, "Transparency International", until recently when it was placed only in the 6third position among the global list of corrupted nations, along with the Seychelles and Thailand. (Lebanon occupied position 97 in 2004 and

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156- Sandra Mackey, *Lebanon: Death of a Nation*, p. 88,  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economy\\_of\\_Lebanon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economy_of_Lebanon)

157- *Christian Emigration Report, Op. Cit.*, p. 2.

position 83 in 2005).<sup>158</sup> Many Lebanese migrants, Christians particularly were reluctant to invest in their home country knowing the funds would serve corrupted politicians, commissions and fraudulent projects, and, would only empower their partners/rivals in the country politics, especially after the infamous Taëf agreement<sup>159</sup> when the Christians lost a lot of their 'historical rights'. The remittances they sent to their families or to their bank accounts remained either insignificant or un-invested. The phenomenon grew to what was called later by the Maronite Patriarch, "the Christian depression" and better described by Saoud El-Maula, a Shiite Muslim who co-founded the National committee for Dialogue between Christians and Muslims in 1993, by the following words: "what preserves the reality of Lebanon, its uniqueness, is the existence of the Christians in Lebanon and their role in the politics, economics, and cultural life of Lebanon". He then adds "it is important for the Muslims to recognize that the Christians feel depressed and try to make them feel better".<sup>160</sup> Christians' depression being an important factor reducing remittances since 75% of Lebanese emigrants are said to be Christians.

3) Yusif Al-Khalil, a deputy director of the credit department at the Central Bank of Lebanon, states in his paper entitled "Economic

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158- See, "Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index 2006", *Op. Cit.*, p. 9.

159- The amendment of the Lebanese constitution giving or empowering the Muslims over the Christians notably by reducing the rights of the Christian President in favor of the Muslim Prime Minister.

160- Jessie Deeter and Anne Senges, "Christians Looking for a Place in Post-War Lebanon", *Berkley Journalism*, USA, UC Berkeley's School of Journalism, N.D., p. 4.



Developments in Lebanon since 1982 that “the remittances of Lebanese working abroad, especially in the Gulf countries, the inflow of capital to support the various war factions (most notably the PLO), as well as earnings from drug exports, contributed to a continuously positive balance of payments.”<sup>161</sup> He adds later on that these same remittances notably declined, especially those originating from the Gulf because of the first Gulf war, the Iraqi invasion to Kuwait and most importantly because of the continuous waves of relatively cheap far-eastern labor to the Gulf countries.<sup>162</sup>

4) Just as the economic roots of Lebanese emigration may be traced to the increase of crop specialization during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and to the subsequent setbacks of the silk market toward the end of the century, political incentives also existed, and many Lebanese left their country for Egypt (then under British rule) or the Americas at the turn of the century. After the mid-1960s, skilled Lebanese were attracted by economic opportunities in the Arab Gulf countries. Large numbers fled abroad, many of them to France, Syria, Jordan, Egypt, and the Gulf countries, during the civil war in 1975/76. In 1986, the Lebanese World Cultural Union estimated that some 13.300.000 persons of Lebanese extraction were living abroad, the largest communities being in Brazil, the United States, and

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161- Yusif Al-Khalil, “Economic Developments in Lebanon since 1982,” *The Lebanon Report*, Lebanon, The Lebanese Center for Policy Studies,  
<http://www.lcps-lebanon.org/pub/breview/br3/ykhalil3.html>

162- *Ibid.*

Argentina. Since the outbreak of war in 1975, internal migration has largely followed the pattern of hostilities, peaking in 1975/76 and again after the Israeli invasion of 1982. In 1993, the number of refugees in various parts of the country was estimated at over 600.000. As of April 1998, the UNHCR was helping to assist 3.191 refugees in Lebanon, including 1.990 Iraqis, 550 Afghans, 284 Sudanese, 152 Somalis, and 250 refugees from various other countries. Also in 1998, there were more than 350.000 Palestinian refugees who were granted asylum in Lebanon, where they were assisted by UNRWA. In 2000, the net migration rate was 4.8 per 1.000 population, down from 12.1 per thousand in 1990. There were 634.000 migrants in Lebanon in 2000, including 382.700 refugees. The government views the migration levels as too high.<sup>163</sup>

On the other hand, most probably for reasons and conditions similar to the Lebanese migrants', Lebanon attracted many foreign workers who remitted money abroad, with a majority of Asians, Arabs and other third world countries. The following tables' figures speak for themselves:

<b>NATIONALITY</b> <sup>164</sup>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>
<b>EGYPTIANS</b>	21.573	19.488
<b>SYRIANS</b>	744	530
<b>SUDANESE</b>	608	495
<b>PALESTINIANS</b>	396	350
<b>JORDANIANS</b>	282	230
<b>IRAQIS</b>	85	103
<b>OTHERS</b>		138
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>23.854</b>	<b>21.334</b>

163- See, <http://www.nationsencyclopedia.com/Asia-and-Oceania/Lebanon-MIGRATION.html>

164- Michael Young, "Migrant Workers in Lebanon", *The Migration Network*, Lebanon, Lebanese NGO Forum, September 2000, p. 5.

The second category established by the Central Administration of Statistics is for non-Arab Asians. The figures reveal that migrant workers from Sri Lanka comprise the single largest chunk of legal migrants entering Lebanon.

<b>NATIONALITY<sup>165</sup></b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>
<b>SRI LANKA</b>	25,170	22,917
<b>INDIANS</b>	7,349	7,196
<b>FILIPINOS</b>	5,694	5,788
<b>OTHERS</b>	3,830	4,348
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>42,043</b>	<b>40,249</b>

**OFFICIAL FIGURES PUBLISHED BY THE MINISTRY OF LABOR (1999)**

<b>NATIONALITY</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>AFRICANS AND ARAB COUNTRIES<sup>166</sup></b>		
EGYPTIANS	19,488	26.8
ETHIOPIANS	11,040	15.2
SUDANESE	495	0.7
SYRIANS <sup>167</sup>	530	0.8
PALESTINIANS	350	0.5
JORDANIANS	230	0.3
IRAQIIS	103	0.1
OTHERS	138	0.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>32,374</b>	<b>44.6</b>
<b>NON-ARAB ASIANS</b>		
SRI-LANKA	22,917	31.5
INDIANS	7,196	9.9
FILIPINOS	5,788	8
OTHER NON-ARAB ASIANS	4,349	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40,250</b>	<b>55.4</b>
<b>GENERAL TOTAL</b>	<b>72,624</b>	<b>100</b>

While there are no reliable figures, there have been estimates of capital outflows due to migrant laborers. These figures take into consideration Syrian laborers, however. According to the journalist Michel Morqos,

165- *Ibid.*, p. 5.

166- *Ibid.*, p. 5.

167- Moonlighting was very common or actually the rule for Syrian labor under the Syrian ward. Over 1.8 million Syrians were said to be working in Lebanon.

writing in An-Nahar in 1998, some \$4.2bn were being set abroad by migrant laborers annually.<sup>168</sup>

5) It was one of the successive Hariri Lebanese governments' steady policies and strong believes, that the migrants' remittances, in addition to the Lebanese capital held abroad, estimated to 10 Billion US Dollars, owned mostly by Lebanese Christians, 'depressed' as explained earlier, should serve paying the bound and increasing national debt.

As a matter of fact, Primer Hariri publicly and bluntly declared that the Lebanese migrants' remittances, should serve his own political ambitions, gravely defying the international human rights, the Lebanese constitution and the Lebanese monetary secrecy system, which all protect personal propriety. In fact, the Solidere Company, in other words the Hariri's privatization of Beirut, a nation's capital, was just another hit to all international and national laws and by-laws. Given all the above mentioned twisted policies, many migrants called-up on their families to migrate and live with them, stopped their remittances and held their monetary funds, once invested in Lebanon, to be used in the countries of their residence, depriving the national economy of a great deal of resources, but for all the right reasons, as no human would like to see his savings invested by someone else, in order to empower his personal closed clan, not the direct

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168- *Ibid.*, p. 7.

family of the owner of the funds himself or the national interest in general.<sup>169</sup>

So how can migrants' remittances become a source for sustainable development or as development finance in a sound way in a country like Lebanon? Is there still room to reverse the equation from brain drain to brain gain, and how can we do that in a world heading at full throttle into globalization and outsourcing strategies?

With little hope from the public Lebanese sectors and institutions, because they lack of seriousness and feasible strategy, be it short term or long term strategies, it could be more interesting reviewing what other countries, or other international bodies and researches, have advised and what was done in this regard.

The world's commission on the social dimension of globalization ideas bank, stretched a clear view on the brain drain problematic and came up with some clear propositions and recommendations. We will proceed by stating the complete concept for it helps understand the dynamics of the problem, and it clarifies ideas we will be discussing further in this study related to remittances and their role in developing the economy. After foreign direct investment and trade-related earnings, remittances represent the largest financial flow into developing countries, far larger than official development assistance (ODA). During the 1990s, the overall value of

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169- The Bureau of Public Affairs US Department of State, "Background Notes on Lebanon: the Superintendent of Documents," Washington, DC, U.S. Government Printing Office, January 1994, <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/bgnotes/nea/lebanon9401.html>

remittances to developing countries doubled, reaching some \$65 billion in 1999. If these growth rates are sustained, remittances to developing countries should top \$100 billion by 2006/07. By comparison, the value of ODA to developing countries remained stable during the 1990s (increasing from \$53 billion in 1990 to \$54 billion in 2000) and is unlikely to increase dramatically in the future. The three largest recipients – India, the Philippines and Mexico – received 38% of the total value of remittances to developing countries in 1998 (equivalent to \$25 billion). Nevertheless, remittances also play a crucial role in smaller countries and island nations, where they can account for as much as 20 to 40 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Remittances, at least as officially measured, have increased faster than developing countries' GDPs over the past decade. Given the value of remittances, some developing country governments (such as the Philippines) have taken an active role in pushing overseas employment as a strategy to boost economic growth and bring about full employment.<sup>170</sup>

Remittances clearly improve the living standards of the households that receive them. Studies find that families receiving remittances have better diets, better access to health care, and are more likely to keep children in school than similar families that do not receive remittances. Families receiving remittances often rise in socio-economic status and may

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170- "Maximizing Remittances for Development", *World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization*, New York, Ideas Bank, ID 64, p. 30.

become pioneers in new economic activities. In many cases, remittances create jobs for family members, such as opening a store or buying cattle.<sup>171</sup>

Non-migrants also benefit from the multiplier impact of remittances on local economies. Although the extent of remittance multipliers is highly controversial, empirical studies suggest that \$1 in remittances generates an additional \$1 in local economic activity as recipients buy local goods or invest in housing, education or health care. However, it is rare for remittances to be invested in a way that creates large numbers of jobs in migrant areas, as is evident seen in West Central Mexican states that have been sending migrants to the US since the 1940s.<sup>172</sup>

Migrants also face excessive costs and difficulties in sending remittances to their families. It is estimated that 10 to 15% of remittances are spent on fees for money transfer including unfavorable exchange rates.<sup>173</sup> Poor banking infrastructure in some Latin American countries and long-term contracts with wire service companies have inhibited competition, keeping the cost of remittance transfers to Latin America much higher than to the rest of the world.<sup>174</sup> While anti-money laundering provisions established after September 11 have disrupted some informal

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171- *Ibid.*, p. 31.

172- *Ibid.*, p. 31.

173- *Global Economic Prospects: Economic Implications of Remittances and Migration*, New York, The World Bank, 34320, 2006, p. 35.

174- Nassib Ghobril, *Expatriates' Remittances and the Lebanese Economy: Brain Drain or Economic Gain?*, Lebanon, Saradar Investment House S.A.L., April 21, 2004.

remittance channels, especially those involving the Middle East, Indonesia and the Philippines.<sup>175</sup>

Governments have a role to play in facilitating processes through which interested migrants can start businesses, invest in their community of origin or donate to public projects. Policy interventions to maximize the value of remittances are required to enhance the economic development payoff to developing countries for the labor they export. Such interventions should be prudent, incentive-based and informed by further research.

In particular, this proposal recommends that: Governments, international organizations, migrants' associations, and other microfinance institutions coordinate initiatives to reduce transaction costs of sending remittances so that migrants, their families, communities, and even governments can maximize the economic benefits of migration. Possible strategies could be to:

- i)** Encourage and facilitate the use of financial services by migrants (e.g. By helping migrants get identity cards to open bank accounts);
- ii)** Initiate innovative micro-credit programs;
- iii)** Expand the use of new financial instruments like remittance-backed bonds;

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175- "Maximizing Remittances for Development", *World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization*, Ideas Bank, ID 64, p. 35.



- iv) Regulate and supervise remittance-handling intermediaries to prevent malpractices.

Governments, international organizations and regional banks develop innovative policies and initiatives to maximize the development impact of remittances. Increasing migrants' incentive for investment in developmental projects in their communities and encouraging remittances to be invested in job creation would be crucial.<sup>176</sup> Possible strategies could include:

- i) Offering tax breaks (e.g. On imported capital, interest, and investment profits);
- ii) Providing matching funds for migrants' investment by using government funds and/or ODA;
- iii) Setting up migrants' investment funds;
- iv) Facilitating transfers from migrants using employer's payroll deduction schemes.

Governments ensure economic policies in migrant areas of origin, do not discourage the formation of small remittance-financed businesses, and that technical and marketing assistance is available to help these businesses succeed. Migrants will remit more and invest remittances in activities with substantial multiplier effects if exchange/inflation rates are stable and there are viable business opportunities available.

Governments and international organizations enhance coordination among the various stakeholders involved (migrant associations, employer

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<sup>176-</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

organizations, microfinance institutions, international financial institutions, governments, international organizations, etc.) In order to avoid fragmentation and maximize impact.<sup>177</sup>

Significance of Policy Proposal Remittances raises the income of families in migrant-sending areas and sustains many poor households. Much of that additional income is spent on debt repayment, housing, food, and basic health care and education, thereby contributing to progress towards the achievement of the UN Millennium Development Goals. Public policy should focus on maximizing the development benefits of migration by increasing the positive impact of remittances since stopping migration is neither possible nor feasible. In addition, by facilitating the transfer of remittances, it will also be possible to measure such flows more accurately and thereby improve the development of policies and interventions based on identified needs.

Critique data and analyses on the extent and impact of remittances on developing countries and areas of origin are inadequate and incomplete. Most existing empirical work examines the impacts of immigration on the labor markets and economies of richer net-receiving countries. Similarly, the size of remittance multipliers is one of the most hotly debated issues in migration and development studies. Economists tend to estimate large and significant multipliers based on Computable General Equilibrium models, while anthropologists, who spend more time in villages, often emphasize

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177- *Ibid.*, p. 38.

that remittances tend to be spent on goods that are not produced in the area or the country (such as vehicles and consumer appliances) limiting their multiplier effects.”<sup>178</sup>

Jorgen Carling of the International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, (PRIO), addresses the same problem, putting an emphasis on the return migration, brain gain, as another added value when considering returnees and their remittances, as well as their contributions after the return, as a source of development and development finance.<sup>179</sup>

### 3. Migration and Return

Along with remittances, the nature of return migration has been seen as a key link between migration and development.<sup>180</sup> When guest worker migrants to Europe returned to their countries of origin in the Mediterranean region in the 1970s and 1980s, there was considerable disappointment over their limited contributions to local development.<sup>181</sup>

More recently, several case studies from different parts of the world have shown that emigrants can be important re-resources in the development process when they return with capital and skills and find conditions that are

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178- *Ibid.*, p. 39.

179- Jorgen Carling, *Migrant Remittances and Development Cooperation*, PRIO Report I/2005, International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, 2005, p. 80 – 85.

180 - B. Ghosh, “Introduction”, *Return Migration: Journey of Hope or despair?*, International Organization for Migration, United Nations, Geneva, 2000, p. 100.

181- See, A.S. Gitmez, ‘Migration without development: The case of Turkey’, in *The unsettled relationship: Labor migration and economic development*, 1991. Also see, A. Kagermeier, and H. POPP, “Immigrant Workers, Return Migration and Regional Development in North-East Morocco”, *Geographical Panorama*, 1995, Vol. 47.

conducive to entrepreneurship.<sup>182</sup> As with the impact of remittances, it is worth asking not only if return migration has positive, neutral or negative effects, but how sound policies can maximize their potential contribution.

Return is sometimes an important element in the culture of emigration<sup>183</sup>. It is evident that many emigrants leave their country of origin with the intention to return, but often end up settling abroad on a permanent basis. Still, the expectation of return among migrants and their families are often central to the dynamics of transnational connections. For instance, sending remittances can be interpreted as an investment in the conditions of reintegration in the case of return.

Countries of emigration sometimes experience the forced return of emigrants, resulting from warfare, political protest, or the deportation of individuals.<sup>184</sup> This can be traumatic for the people affected, harmful to the national economy, and challenging to the local communities faced with an influx of involuntary returnees. The possibility of such forced returns points to the vulnerability that accompanies the possible development benefits of emigration.<sup>185</sup>

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182- Jorgen Carling, *Migrant Remittances and Development Cooperation*, PRIO Report I/2005, Oslo, International Peace Research Institute, 2005, p. 80 – 85.

183- *Ibid.*, p. 80 – 85.

184- *Ibid.*, p. 80 – 85.

185- *Ibid.*, p. 80 – 85. Lebanon was clearly affected by the persecution of its communities in Africa. Most emigrants returned back without being able to bring in the fortunes they had made in Africa.

**Classification of recipients of bilateral development cooperation through  
Norad by remittances as a proportion of GDP**

**Remittances as a proportion of GDP, 1992 – 2001 average**

	>10.0	2.5 – 9.9	0.5 – 2.4	0.0 – 0.4	No data
<b>Main partner countries</b>		Bangladesh Nepal		Malawi Mozambique Uganda	Tanzania Zambia
<b>Other partner countries</b>	Eritrea	Mali Nigeria Sri Lanka Nicaragua	Guatemala Pakistan	Angola China Ethiopia Indonesia Kenya Madagascar	Afghanistan South Africa Timor-Leste Vietnam OPT <sup>186</sup>
<b>Other recipients of bilateral development co-operation through Norad</b>	Albania Cape Verde El Salvador Jordan <u>Lebanon</u> Yemen	Belize Bosnia and Herzegovina Burkina Faso Croatia Dominican Republic Ecuador Egypt Honduras Jamaica Sudan	Azerbaijan Barbados Bolivia Costa Rica Guinea-Bissau India Iran Macedonia Mauritania Mexico Mongolia Niger Paraguay Peru Philippines São Tome & Príncipe Senegal Seychelles Turkey	Argentina Bhutan Botswana Brazil Burundi Cambodia Cameroon Chad Cote d'Ivoire Gambia Ghana Laos Lesotho Malaysia Maldives Mauritius Namibia Papua New Guinea Rwanda Sierra Leone Syria Thailand Turkmenistan Uruguay Uzbekistan Zimbabwe	Congo, DR Cuba Equatorial Guinea Fiji Haiti Liberia Myanmar North Korea Somalia Swaziland
Source: World Bank (2003b)					

186- OPT: Occupied Palestinian Territory.

Carling then concludes by several recommendations,<sup>187</sup> specific to the Norwegian hand-in in this matter but that could be applied in Lebanon and of which we state:

**I.** Be attentive to the effects of policy in other areas on immigrant's opportunities for sending remittances and/or doing business in their countries of origin.

**II.** Work with other agencies to promote transnational entrepreneurship among migrants.

**III.** Work with other government agencies to create opportunities for reasonable and reliable transfer mechanisms to poor countries.

**IV.** Work with the Ministry of Finance to promote tax exemption for gifts to charitable organizations in developing countries.

**V.** Work with immigrant communities to promote reasonable, reliable and development-friendly transfer mechanisms to developing countries.

**VI.** Work with migrant communities to facilitate transnational entrepreneurship uniting Lebanon and the *Mahjar*.

**VII.** Work with immigrant association and other ngos with immigrant member-ship to promote development initiatives in migrants' countries of origin.

**VIII.** Work with Lebanese financial institutions in Lebanon to promote reasonable, reliable and development-friendly transfer mechanisms from developing countries.

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187- Jorgen Carling, *Op. Cit.*, p. 84.

**IX.** Work with microfinance institutions in partner countries to promote linkages between remittances and microfinance.

**X.** Assist partner country governments in formulating and implementing sound policies to increase the benefits of remittances.

Lebanon could work with *Mahjar* country governments to improve the formulation and implementation of policies to increase the benefits of remittances.<sup>188</sup> This would include many of the policy measures discussed in the previous section. The following deserve special mention:

- Elaborating financial incentive schemes.
- Stimulating the provision of remittance services by MFIs.
- Promoting financial literacy.
- Reducing the proportion of unbanked households.
- Matching communal remittances with government funds.
- Reviewing financial policy and regulations to promote investment by migrants.
- Improving the investment climate for SMEs.
- Elaborating strategies for long-term Diaspora management”.<sup>189</sup>

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development recommends in the same field:

- Promoting competition among money transfer firms to reduce transaction costs.

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188- *Ibid.*, p. 84.

189- *Ibid.*, p. 86.

- Encouraging remitters to shift their business from purely money transfer operators towards broader-based financial institutions that can provide bank account and credit services to recipients.
- Creating innovative financial products that encourage recipients to save part of remittance flows.
- Enhancing the institutional capacity of credit unions and microfinance institutions in remittance receiving countries.
- Promoting home town associations as a means of channeling part of remittances towards community projects.<sup>190</sup>
- Establishing Diaspora business networks to mobilize or facilitate investment in home countries.
- Offering bonds to Diaspora workers to raise money for investment in their home countries.
- Encouraging the Diaspora to make their intellectual capital available to their home countries through visits, consultancies or internet contacts.<sup>191</sup>

Lebanon, being no exception in the volume of both its migrants and their remittances values and most importantly in their effect on the social, economical and financial sectors, can and should be implementing some, if not all, of the previous recommendations in order to develop a winning strategy in the use of the migrants' remittances. It should also follow the

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190- "Remittances as development finance", *OECD Report 2005*, p. 45.

191- *Ibid.*, p. 45.



recommendations addressed to uncover the direct and indirect effects of the return migrants as a value on its own.

#### 4. Solutions for Reversing the Brain Drain

Reverse brain drain is a result of systematic efforts either by the government or the private sector. Originally, three strategies are used to reverse the equation:

- **Restrictive policies-** Designed to make migration more difficult e.g. Compulsory national service.
- **Incentive policies-** Designed to make emigration less attractive- e.g. Offering highly skilled workers incentives to remain in the home country.
- And **compensatory policies** as proposed by Bhagwati<sup>192</sup> – whereby either the receiving country or the individual migrant gets taxed in order to compensate the sending country for the loss of human capital.

These policies however were not very effective, because: restrictive policies are only temporary and not permanent deterrence for migration. Incentive policies are also not very effective, because developing countries are not in a position to offer highly skilled professionals salaries and infrastructure comparable to that they would have access to in developed countries. Compensatory policies on the other hand are also problematic because it is

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192- J.N. Bhagwati, *The reverse transfer of technology (brain drain): International resource flow accounting, compensation, taxation and related policy proposals*, N.P., United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, 1977, p. 22.

difficult to measure exactly the loss to the country of origin in monetary terms.

Investment policies could constitute however a solid solution to the problem. As a matter of fact, the serious commitment of governments in Asia, for example, to the utilization of human resources abroad has been one of the most effective ways to attract top-ranked researchers from abroad, either with permanent or temporary appointments. The Korea Institute of Science and Technology, established in 1966, exemplifies the crucial role of the government in facilitating the employment of personnel both at home and overseas. Furthermore, science cities in Asia, such as Tsukuba in Japan, Hsinchu in Taiwan, and Daeduk in South Korea, arise from an effort to support science and maintain a community of scientists.

It has recently been noted that the private sector also plays an active role in recruiting personnel working overseas for their own economic reasons. Many private industries in Lebanon are actively participating in the global economy and competing with industries of developed countries. In order to be competitive internationally, those private industries have made great efforts in keeping up with cutting-edge science and technology. When the private sector builds new research centers or laboratories, it needs high-level personnel in advanced fields of science. This is the reason for the great demand for researchers from developed countries with advanced

training and work experience. While this solution has been noticed on a very small scale, efforts should be made to raise the numbers of repatriates.

Secondly, reverse brain drain occurs not only because there are expanding opportunities to do research in Lebanon, but also because visas for foreign researchers in the US are declining. After the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States, the number of HB-1 Visas was reduced to some critical numbers that alarmed many American companies owners such as Bill Gates who demanded in an open speech addressed to the congress that they have the responsibility not only to restore the previous number of visas but also to increase them because the US is losing its creativity edge that makes of it an advanced country. In general, the academic job market in the United States has had fewer openings. In addition, US funding agencies have been cutting their support for university research, and the competition for these funds has increased. Reverse brain drain can be seen as a natural outcome to these circumstances, leading scientists to look for alternatives to the increasingly competitive funding process in the United States. Because of their cultural background and proficiency in the language, Lebanese-born scholars may feel more comfortable and confident in a Lebanese work environment. Their home country is able to offer a higher position in academe or a research institute with excellent perquisites. Thus, US-based Lebanese scholars are more inclined to seek out opportunities in this new research environment in Lebanon.

Thirdly, reverse brain drain offers benefits not only for Lebanon but also for the United States and/or other receiving countries, and the international scientific community. To be concrete, advanced knowledge and technology brought home by returning scientists give Lebanon an important momentum for enhancing the level and quality of scientific works. The United States and/or the receiving countries, in turn, benefits financially through exporting scientific equipment and is virtually assured of a continued scientific relationship with Lebanon through these “Abroad”-trained researchers. And of course, any technological advances made in Lebanon benefit the larger scientific community by distributing low or intermediate technology. Thus repatriated scholars do not completely isolate themselves from their former colleagues in the *Mahjar*. Rather, they are likely to strengthen scientific ties with *Mahjar*-based scholars to keep up with the newest developments in the field.

Until the political agitation is permanently settled in Lebanon providing by then both security and money inflow, the return option encouraging highly skilled expatriates to return home is somewhat a dream for Lebanon which has to be in a position to offer its expatriates what they want to attract them back: salaries and infrastructure comparable to that in the countries in which they work. Nowadays, Lebanon is not in a position to compete with the industrialized countries in which its highly skilled expatriates are often located.

This has led to consider a different approach to the brain drain, the Diaspora option.

The “Diaspora option” represents a different approach to the brain drain. It takes a fundamentally different stance to traditional perspectives on the brain drain in that it sees the brain drain not as a loss, but a potential gain to the sending country. Highly skilled expatriates are seen as a pool of potentially useful human resources for the country of origin, the challenge is to mobilize these brains.

The Diaspora option is based on network approaches where a network can be defined as a regular set of contacts or similar connections among individual actors or groups<sup>193</sup>. These networks of highly skilled emigrants are referred to as expatriate knowledge networks. The main feature of the Diaspora option is that it tries to set up connections/linkages between highly skilled emigrants and between them and Lebanon. This allows for information and knowledge exchange between expatriates and between them and Lebanon, it allows expatriates the opportunity to transfer their expertise and skills to Lebanon, without necessarily returning home permanently. In this way, Lebanon has access to the knowledge and expertise of the expatriate, but also the knowledge networks that he/she forms part of in the host country.

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193- M. Granovetter, and R. Swedberg, *The Sociology of Economic Life*, San Francisco, Westview Press, 1992, p. 9.

A crucial element of the Diaspora option is an effective system of information to facilitate the transfer and exchange of information between network members and between them and their counterparts in the country of origin. Another element highlighted by theorists like Callon, necessary in any network are intermediaries or incentives necessary to “cement” the linkages between actors in the network; network members must reap certain benefits from their participation in the network<sup>194</sup>. But how do these networks work?

### **Intellectual/Scientific Diaspora Networks**

Forty-one expatriate knowledge networks have been identified around the world to date. These only include networks with the explicit purpose of connecting the expatriates among themselves and with the country of origin. These expatriate knowledge networks are tied to 30 different countries and two world regions, some of which have more than one network. What is disturbing however is that of these 41 networks only six are linked to African countries compared to other world regions like Latin America and the Middle East.

Expatriate Knowledge Networks that were identified are classified into five categories: student/scholarly networks, local associations of skilled expatriates, expert pool assistance through the Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals (TOKTEN) program of the UNDP,

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194- Callon in J. Murdoch, "Actor-Networks and the Evolution of Economic Forms: Combining Description and Explanation in theories of Regulation, Flexible Specialization and Networks", in *Environment and Planning A*, Vol.27, N.P., 1995, p. 747

developing intellectual/scientific Diaspora networks and intellectual/scientific Diaspora networks.<sup>195</sup> The latter group is particularly interesting, because it is more comparable for example to South Africa's own initiative to mobilize its highly skilled expatriates, the South African Network of Skills Abroad,<sup>196</sup> which brings us to the intellectual/scientific Diaspora networks.

These intellectual/scientific Diaspora networks share a number of characteristics. They were all initiated recently, in the late eighties and early nineties. They emerged very spontaneously and independently of each other. They all appeal to the loyalty and commitment of highly skilled expatriates living abroad to the country of origin. Most of the membership of scientific/intellectual Diaspora networks consists of nationals of a particular country living abroad. However networks such as the Colombian network (Caldas) and the South African Network of Skills Abroad (SANSA) consist of members who are not necessarily of Colombian or South African origin, but are simply interested in the development of these countries.<sup>197</sup> Almost 70% of Caldas network members are not of Colombian

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195- For more information on Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals (TOKTEN) for Lebanon visit:

<http://www.undp.org.lb/tokten/procedure.html>

196- See, M. J. Fourie and R. Joubert, *Emigration's Influence on South Africa: A Human Capital Theory Approach*, South Africa, University of South Africa, 1998, p. 33.

197- J. Rosenbaum, et al., "Market and Network Theories of the Transition from High School to Work: their Application to Industrial Societies", in *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 16, 1990, p. 81.

origin<sup>198</sup> while fifty-seven nationalities are represented in the SANSA network. This shows that loyalty to one's country of birth might not be the single most important factor which motivates highly skilled people to join these networks, but other incentives also play a role. Other factors may not be in the advantage of Lebanon since the Lebanese *Mahjar* is on all five continents which make the network chain a bit harder.

One should keep in mind that the highly skilled and highly qualified could also be over qualified. A large number of PhDs and Masters Holders feel unable to get established, which links us back to the governmental efforts in this effect. This however differs from one field of expertise to another: Universities such as NDU, AUB and LAU recruit Lebanese abroad trained or graduate students and PhDs to teach and train at their universities. This sounds more common in the humanities, politics and arts faculties while there is still a huge lack in the science faculties. Once more, underdeveloped countries such as Lebanon count on a huge investment to create job opportunities which is not the case, at least for a while now due to the current political constraints.

Thus creating networks such as the SNSA and the Caldas will provide better ties between the *Mahjar* and Lebanon. The Lebanese World Cultural Union is a rough example as this institution needs to be organized and helped to surpass confessional and sectarian barriers. Creating an

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198- Meyer et al., "Turning Brain Drain into Brain Gain: The Colombian Experience of the Diaspora Option", in *Science, Technology and Society*, Vol. 2, No. 2, 1997, p. 46.



exhaustive data base could be an answer to help register all expatriates under their appropriate domains. In order for this network to succeed, it should be independent, non-political and a non-profitable organization. This network has to have links to some governmental institutions like the Ministry of Education or the ministry of Social Affairs. This suggests that although the network is like to maintain an independent character, some institutional support is necessary in order to generate action and concrete, purposeful activities to enable networks to fulfill its goals.

Often, a migrant acquires new skills and expertise that he/she might not have had access to in Lebanon. The Diaspora option allows Lebanon access to not only the skills and expertise of its expatriate, but also the knowledge networks that he/she forms part of in the host country. It also allows for the transfer of information and technology from more industrialized countries back to Lebanon. In short, it allows for the brain drain to be turned into a brain gain.<sup>199</sup>

Although some networks generate more activities than others, what is needed is an effective system of information which allows for the connection and transfer of knowledge and information among networks members and between them and the country of origin. The Internet plays an important role in making the connections between network members and Lebanon. The Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC) receives daily

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199- Brown Mercy, *Using the Intellectual Diaspora to Reverse Brain Drain: Some Useful Examples*, South Africa, University of Cape Town, 2002.

requests from migrants wishing to reconnect and reestablish roots in Lebanon. LERC is also ran by a former professional Lebanese expatriate. Another important element is an effective incentive scheme which would ensure the continued commitment of network members to the network and ultimately the sustainability thereof. Some institutional support from governments and other institutions in the home country would also aid in the generation of projects and activities.

The Diaspora option might not be a magical “solution” to the brain drain problem. However it goes beyond traditional approaches in that the brain drain is not seen as a “problem” only, but it gives developing countries an opportunity to capitalize on the very characteristics inherent to the “brain drain” through the remote mobilization of its highly skilled human resources.

## Conclusion

### Recommendations

Lebanese migration, in its trends within the common recent phenomenon, if we consider its earliest manifestation in the 1880s, fits the description of chain migration. Chain migration involves sets of related individuals or households who move from one place to another through a set of social arrangements in which people at destination provide aid, information, and encouragement to the new comers.”<sup>200</sup>

One can note that in the Lebanese case, migration gendered further migration. Throughout the past century, migrants have been calling upon their families and kinship to join them in the *Mahjar*. The economical and political instability in Lebanon played as the prominent instigator for migration driving over a million Lebanese abroad in the past 25 years; fortifying by the lack of investments’ facilities, stability and education which have pulled a considerable number of Lebanese to the West and Australia.

Some historians have reasons to believe that over 13 million Lebanese and/or of Lebanese descendant are scattered around the globe.<sup>201</sup> That said, the amplitude of the migration phenomenon, while very lucrative to Lebanon in terms of incoming remittances, have become in the past two decades a real problem as indicated in the thesis. Recent migrants have a

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200- Charles Tilly, *Op. Cit.*, p. 88.

201- *Christian Emigration Report, Op. Cit.*, p. 7.

complete different profile from the first “pioneer” migrants; Lebanon is now loosing its assets of human capital to the favor of developed countries, notably Canada and the United States of America. Brain drain is thus a fact and the problem of the Lebanese government and society has to understand and deal with.

Since stopping migration cannot be the solution, notably because of Lebanon’s geographical and demographical situation, this study suggested ways and tools on how to make migration and more particularly brain drain profitable to the migrants, the host country and to Lebanon.

So far, remittances have been used to cover household spending and expenses, debt payment and education. Pumping money in the Lebanese market is always profitable and revives the economical cycle. However, these remittances do not affect fast or directly the national economical status. Opportunities have to be created and facilities are a must so that these remitting migrants come back and invest both their money and acquired skills and expertise on the Lebanese market.

If remittances will be always and exclusively bound to families’ needs, we are to keep in mind that once the family moves and joins the provider abroad, there will be less reasons for them to invest or send money to Lebanon. Unless we create opportunities, propose facilities and guarantee the reduction of corruption and instability, we are most unlikely to reverse the brain drain equation.

There are other possibilities to redirect and orientate remittances and donations to Lebanon such as creating NGOs and associations with clear strategies and a lot of transparency in order to keep remittances coming. These associations produce a double profit: while reviving the economy, these associations keep and maintain the ties of the migrants with their roots, strengthening by then their attachment and patriotic feeling and sympathy with Lebanon, whereas migrants can be tax exempted for the funds they send back home for good causes. These associations often create jobs and help Lebanese in distress keeping them in their areas and reducing by then the possibilities of internal exodus and henceforth migration.

Support, on the other hand, is not exclusively the inflow of remittances; political support and propaganda are an essential asset, as Lebanon is in need of effective lobbying especially nowadays. The last war on Lebanon – July 2006 – have proven the efficiency of the Lebanese presence in the world which succeeded in portraying the true aspect of atrocities committed against the Lebanese people, and managed to stimulate a large wave of anger, protests and solidarity with Lebanon. Websites were built, money was sent, relief associations participated extensively in sheltering refugees and wounded.

Stopping migration would be a double edge sound in Lebanon; its negative effects would be disastrous on the work force and the financial resources. Reducing it, however, requires the following:

1. Creating jobs and opportunities by encouraging local, regional and international investments through a specified and transparent legal and judicial system. Creating a climate of trust in the public sector.
2. Creating a modern social security system so young people would not immigrate.
3. Reducing corruption by institutionalization of more supervising agencies on the affairs of the different public administration.
4. Finding a stable political system.
5. Developing advanced research institutions for the highly educated by linking all ministries in a comprehensive research plan.
6. Establishing strategies and promoting investments especially in agricultural and industrial sectors in rural areas.
7. Establishing democracy as a system of government and a way of life by guaranteeing through legal system the respect of freedoms and basic rights of the citizen and enhancing the rule of law
8. Persevering in supporting the youth and promoting guidance their role in developing the society and in stimulating democratic political life.
9. Respecting the basic foundations of the free economic system and personal initiative within the boundaries of human dignity and the welfare and principles of social justice.
10. Instituting a culture of citizenship in the aim of achieving social equality between the Lebanese, and a fair distribution of wealth.

11. Enable the Lebanese Diaspora to exercise their political rights in Lebanon from their countries of expansion and strengthen the bond among them and between them and Lebanon such as exercising their voting rights.

On the contrary, investing in migration and channeling migrants' assets and capacities into the right sectors in Lebanon by strengthening ties remains the only solution for a country that economically relies more on its citizen abroad than on its residents.

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What do you need?

I I I do a home that isn't available

Outdoors:

1) closed relaxing space

2) Bed

3) Food and refr.

4) people to live with. (share, interact, believe)

5) Absence of disturbance, fear, aggression, ~~vitality~~  
and shame that result from other people

6)